

# **Scottish Korfball** **Association**

## **Child Protection Policy and Guidelines**

August 2011

# Contents

Child Protection Policy Statement	2
Recruitment and Monitoring of Staff and Volunteers	3
Promoting Good Practice with Young People	5
What is Child Abuse?	8
Identifying Signs of Abuse	9
Taking Appropriate Action	10
Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers	12
Establishing Policies and Procedures	14

# **SKA Child Protection Policy Statement**

1. The Scottish Korfball Association accepts its moral and legal responsibility to implement procedures to provide a duty of care and safeguard the wellbeing of young people. The Children's Act 1989 defines a young person as being under 18 years of age.
2. The welfare of young persons is the primary concern.
3. The Scottish Korfball Association respects and promotes the rights, wishes and feelings of all young people.
4. The Scottish Korfball Association aims to ensure that all young people, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity are welcomed into a safe, caring environment with a happy and friendly atmosphere.
5. The Scottish Korfball Association aims to develop a positive and pro-active position in order to protect all children and young people who play Korfball, enabling them to participate in an enjoyable and safe environment.
6. The Scottish Korfball Association requires all bodies affiliated to the Scottish Korfball Association which provide the opportunity to work with children and young people up to the age of eighteen, to include in their Constitution a policy statement concerning child protection.
7. The Scottish Korfball Association aims to demonstrate best practice in the area of Child Protection.
8. The Scottish Korfball Association aims to promote ethics and high standards throughout Korfball.
9. The Scottish Korfball Association encourages its staff and volunteers to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect young people from abuse, and themselves against false allegations.
10. The Scottish Korfball Association requires all coaches, managers, referees, staff and volunteers working with children to sign up to a 'Code of Conduct' ( Appendices A and C) to safeguard the welfare of young people.
11. The Scottish Korfball Association aims to integrate the Child Protection Policy into any Scottish Korfball Association Coaching Award courses that may take place.
12. The Scottish Korfball Association recognises that it is the responsibility of each one of its staff/volunteers to prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse of young people and children and to report any abuse discovered or suspected.
13. The Scottish Korfball Association will respond to any allegations or suspicions of abuse appropriately and has disciplinary and appeals procedures in place to deal with incidences of poor practice.
14. It is the responsibility of child protection professionals to determine whether or not abuse has taken place, but it is everyone's responsibility to report any concerns.
15. Confidentiality should be upheld in line with the Data Protection Act 1998, the Human Rights Act 2002 and the Freedom of Information Act.

# **1. RECRUITMENT AND MONITORING OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS**

False allegations of abuse are rare. All reasonable steps must be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with young people. The same procedures should be adopted whether Club/Association officials are paid or unpaid.

## **1.1 Registration Form**

All staff and volunteers should complete a registration form (see Appendix B). All situations which involve work with children and/or young people are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Therefore all applicants should be asked to disclose information about criminal convictions.

## **1.2 Applicant's prior contact with young people**

It is important that the nature of the applicant's contacts with children and young people are thoroughly explored. These may be through previous work in the Club/Association, through family contacts, through work with a voluntary organisation or in other ways. If there is any doubt about the suitability of the applicant this should be explored further through searching questions.

## **1.3 References**

A determined applicant may well tell a lie. It is for this reason that a reference should be obtained. If the applicant has moved frequently from one organisation to another it would be advisable to find out why. References should be sought in writing. It must be made clear that the person is to work with children/young people and that it is the referee's views on the applicant's suitability for this work which are being invited. If replies are vague or ambiguous it may be necessary for them to be followed up in person or by telephone.

## **1.4 Criminal Records Disclosure**

A CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) disclosure check should be carried out. You should contact the SKA's Child Protection Officer (CPO) to initiate the procedure. The SKA CPO will send a disclosure form to be completed by the applicant. This should be returned to the SKA CPO who will then endorse the application and send this to the CRB. As soon as the results are available, the SKA CPO will inform you whether the applicant is considered suitable to work with children. You should allow approximately eight weeks for the results to be known.

## **1.5 Give all volunteers clear roles**

Abuse of children and young people is most easily concealed where there is confusion amongst adults about roles and responsibilities for the protection of children and young people.

Coaches, managers and all staff and volunteers should have a clear idea of what is expected of them. They should respectively adhere to the Code of Conduct for Coaches (Appendix C) and the Code of Conduct for Volunteers (Appendix A). They should be aware that their contact with young people in the course of their work with the Club/Association puts them in a relationship of trust (i.e. in a position of power or influence over another by virtue of their work or the nature of the activity.)

## **1.6 Ongoing Personal Development**

Everyone must accept and be able to recognise their responsibilities with regard to their own good practice and the reporting of suspected poor practice/concerns of possible abuse. Everyone with substantial access to young persons must have recognised and up to date training in the following areas:

- Child Protection awareness
- First Aid
- How to work effectively with children

Sports Coach UK runs various relevant workshops throughout the UK and clubs are encouraged to facilitate the attendance of their staff/volunteers.

### **1.7 Monitoring and Appraisal**

Regular opportunities should be made for staff and volunteers to meet together to review and plan their work, to share their experiences, to receive training and to talk about their relationships with children and young people. Special attention should be paid to any situation in which a young person is being either highly favoured or harshly treated, as these could be signs of abuse.

When possible Club/Association committee members should take opportunities to observe those for whom they are responsible as they work. All staff and volunteers should be offered formal or informal feedback at regular intervals, to identify personal development needs and set new goals.

Clubs/Association personnel should be sensitive to any concerns about poor practice or abuse and act on them immediately. They should also offer appropriate support to those who report concerns/complaints.

## **2. PROMOTING GOOD PRACTICE WITH YOUNG PEOPLE**

All staff and volunteers should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from false allegations.

### **2.1 Codes of Conduct**

A Code of Conduct for Volunteers and a Code of Conduct for Coaches can be found at **Appendices A** and **C** respectively.

A Sample Code for the Conduct of Young players can be found at **Appendix D**. The codes will be slightly different for each Korfball Club.

### **2.2 Register of Korfball Club/Association Staff & Volunteers**

All Staff and volunteers should be on this list and must have signed to say that they have read and agree to abide by the club's code/s of conduct.

A sample Volunteer registration form can be found at **Appendix B**.

### **2.3 Player Registration forms**

All young players in your Club/Association should complete a Player Registration Form (**Appendix E**) at the start of the season, and also as new members join the Club/Association. This will enable you to contact members in an emergency and will also provide medical information should you require it.

### **2.4 Club Risk Assessment Form**

Korfball is a game that involves attackers and defenders and passing a ball within a defined playing area. There is therefore an element of risk for players, officials and spectators, of both causing and receiving physical injury. Risk Assessment is a process designed to minimise such risks and achieve an acceptable balance between safety and competitiveness. Safety is about minimising risk.

The principal risks are:

- The pitch and its surroundings
- The quality of control exercised by those in charge, be they coaches, trainers, school teachers, referees, tournament organisers or administrators, and
- The level of personal and team responsibility exercised by the players

The risk assessment form at **Appendix F** should be used as an introduction to identifying the types of risks your members may be exposed to. If anything occurs which had not been anticipated, it might be held that it was unforeseeable incident and was something the Club/Association could not have been prepared for.

### **2.5 Incidents**

Guidelines for how to deal with accidents can be found at Appendix G.

You should complete the Incident report form (Appendix H) as soon as possible after the incident and preferably within 24 hours. The form needs to be completed whether medical attention was needed or not, in case further steps need to be taken.

### **2.6 Good Practice with Young People in Korfball**

Demonstrate good practice by:

- Treating all young people equally and with respect and dignity  
Always putting the welfare of each young person first, before winning or achieving goals
- Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empower children to share in the decision- making process

- Making sport fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play  
Keeping up to date with the technical skills, qualifications and insurance in sport
- Being an excellent role model – this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people.
- Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with young persons. It is not appropriate to have an intimate relationship with a young person or share a room with them.
- Ensuring that if any form of physical contact is required, young people should always be consulted and their agreement gained. Some parents are becoming increasingly sensitive about physical contact and their views should always be carefully considered and respected.
- Involving parents wherever possible, e.g. for the responsibility of their children in the changing room. If it is necessary to supervise in the changing rooms, always ensure volunteers work in pairs.
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
- Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people – avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will
- Always working in an open environment. Arrange that, as far as possible, an adult is not left alone with a young person where there is little or no opportunity for the activity to be observed by others. This good practice can be as much benefit to the adult as to the young person.
- Always having at least two adults present with a group.
- Always ensuring appropriate ratios of leadership to children are observed according to age and gender. The SKA recommends an adult to child ratio of 1:8 for players aged 8 and under and 1:12 for players aged over the age of 8. For Tours, the recommended adult to child ratio is 1:6.
- Thinking about use of premises. For example do not expect children or young people to have to walk along a dark unsupervised path in order to access the toilets.
- Securing parental 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
- Keeping a written record of each activity/session. This record should include a register of children and staff and details of any significant incidents, including injuries that occur, along with the details of any treatment given
- Requesting written parental consent if club officials are required to transport young people in their cars.

### **Practice to be avoided**

If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable, they should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of the Club/Association Child Protection Officer and the child's parents:

- Avoid spending time alone with young people away from others.
- Avoid taking young people alone on car journeys however short.
- Avoid taking young people to your home where they will be alone with you.

### **2.7 Practice never to be sanctioned**

The following must never be sanctioned. You should never:

- 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 young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a young person, even in fun
- Do things of a personal nature for young people that they can do for themselves
- Invite or allow young people to stay with you at your home unsupervised
- Reduce children to tears as a form of control
- Refer to a child's ethnicity, disability, gender or sexuality in a way which is derogatory
- Allow allegations made by a child to go unrecorded or not acted upon.  
It may sometimes be necessary for staff or volunteers to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are young. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parents and the performers involved.

If you accidentally hurt a child and they seem distressed in any manner, appear to be sexually aroused by your actions, or misunderstand or misinterpret something you have done, report any such incident immediately to another Club/Association member and make a brief written record of it. The child's parents/carers should also be informed of the incident, preferably in person.

## **2.9 Tours and Away fixtures**

The Tour Consent Form (**Appendix I**) and Tour Registration Form (**Appendix J**) should be completed for away fixtures and for domestic or international tours.

The Tour Organiser should complete the Tour Registration Form (**Appendix J**) and have it signed by the Chair of the Club/Association. The tour organiser signs to certify that all the information on the form is true. Making a false statement could have serious implications if legal action were to be taken. A copy of this form should be left with a responsible Club/Association member not going on the tour. If the tour is overseas, the form must be filed with the SKA.

Participants should complete the Tour Consent Form (**Appendix I**).

Where children have to be transported by car or minibus, arrange as far as possible to have more than one adult passenger in the vehicle and to have children seated in the back seats of the vehicle. If private vehicles are being used for transport a Private Vehicle Registration Form (**Appendix K**) should be completed by the driver.

Travel by private vehicles is not ideal and travel by private vehicle with only one adult (regardless of the number of young persons in each vehicle) should be avoided. If cases arise where this is unavoidable, they should occur only with the full knowledge of the Club/Association and the young person's parents.

Never take a group for an away fixture or tour with fewer than two adults. Where teams are staying away from home, they should always be accompanied by an adult male and an adult female coach / official.

The Club/Association should travel with a full address list and contact telephone numbers for all the young people within their team and the permission of the parent of each child (the inclusion of special instructions, dietary requirements and allergies is also extremely useful). This will allow Team Managers to take the necessary action in the event of an emergency.

A coach or additional adult on a tour or away fixture may be need to exercise a higher degree of care than usual to satisfy the Duty of Care. Adults should respect the privacy of young people but reserve the right to enter young people's rooms in exceptional circumstances. For example, if the trip involve s a significant number of young people, if the trip is overseas or if the tour involves young people participating at different venues. For those events that require an overnight stay in lodgings/hotels it is essential that Team Managers take the necessary action to prevent the misuse of alcohol (from hotel minibars etc.) and access to adult video/film channels.

## **3. WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?**

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 five main categories of abuse:

### **3.1 Neglect**

Neglect occurs when adults fail to meet a child’s essential physical and/or psychological needs. Examples of neglect include failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, constantly leaving children alone or unsupervised, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment and refusing to give children affection and attention.

Neglect in Korfball could include a coach failing to ensure that children are safe and comfortable, or exposing them to undue cold or to unnecessary risk of injury.

### **3.1 Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse occurs when someone physically hurts or injures a child by hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, biting, suffocating, drowning or otherwise causing deliberate physical harm to them. Giving children inappropriate drugs or alcohol also constitutes physical abuse.

Physical abuse in Korfball may be deemed to occur if the nature and intensity of training and competition exceeds the capacity of the child’s immature and growing body or predisposes the child to injury resulting from fatigue or overexertion. This includes instances where drugs are used to delay puberty, to control diet or to enhance performance.

### **3.3 Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse occurs when adults or other children (both male and female) use children to meet their own sexual needs. This could include full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse or fondling. Showing children pornographic material (e.g. books, videos, pictures) also constitutes sexual abuse. Sexual abuse also includes suggestions that sexual favours can help (or refusal can hinder) a career.

There is evidence that some people have used sporting events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or videos of young sportspeople in vulnerable positions.

In Korfball, physical support is generally unnecessary; therefore physical contact should be minimised.

### **3.4 Emotional abuse**

Children who have suffered neglect, physical or sexual abuse will also have suffered some level of emotional abuse. Children of all ages can be emotionally abused in a number of ways, such as through imposing developmentally inappropriate expectations on them, making them feel worthless, unloved, inadequate or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person, making them feel frightened or in danger, shouting at, threatening or taunting them. Overprotection may also constitute a form of emotional abuse.

In Korfball emotional abuse might occur if young people are subjected to constant criticism, name-calling, sarcasm, bullying, racism or unrealistic pressure to perform to high expectations consistently. In some cases this may come from parents as well as coaches. The power of the coach over young performers, if misused, may also lead to abusive situations developing.

### **3.5 Bullying and harassment**

Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour usually repeated over a period of time where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. It can be verbal, written or physical and can include actions such as physical assaults, name-calling, sarcasm, racist taunts, threats, gestures, unwanted physical contact, graffiti, stealing or hiding personal items. Bullying can even occur via the Internet or via text messages.

Although bullying often takes place in schools it can and does occur anywhere there is inadequate supervision, for example on the way to and from school or Korfball or in the changing rooms. The competitive nature of Korfball makes it an ideal environment for the bully. The bully in Korfball could be the parent/carer who pushes too hard, the coach who adopts a win-at-all costs philosophy, even other competitors or team-mates.

## **4. IDENTIFYING SIGNS OF ABUSE**

All individuals in Korfball are responsible for the welfare of each child in their care. There is a responsibility to protect young people from abuse not only within the Korfball setting, but also at home.

Recognising abuse is not easy even for individuals who are experienced in working with abuse. In some situations 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. Often personal feelings of shock or anger can interfere with the recognition that abuse is taking place and it is easy to deny that it is happening.

Possible signs of abuse include:

- Someone else (a young person or adult) expresses concern about the welfare of another young person.
- Uncharacteristic changes in the child's behaviour, attitude and commitment, e.g. becoming quiet and withdrawn, or displaying sudden outbursts of temper
- Fear of particular adults – especially those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
- Difficulty making friends
- Bruises and injuries for which the explanation seems inconsistent.
- Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from the other children
- Loss of weight or being constantly underweight
- Children who are always alone and unaccompanied and/or are prevented from socialising with other children
- An unkempt state (frequently dirty or smelly)
- Inappropriate sexual awareness.
- Signs of discomfort and pain.
- Reluctance to remove tracksuit or to shower
- Inappropriate dress.
- Nervousness when approached or touched.
- The child wishes to switch to another coach without a reasonable explanation.
- Children who are reluctant to go home.

It is not the responsibility of anyone working under the auspices of a Korfball Club / Association to take responsibility or to decide whether or not child abuse is taking place. However, there is a responsibility to protect young people in order that appropriate agencies can then make enquiries and take any necessary action.

## **5. TAKING APPROPRIATE ACTION**

You may suspect abuse, you may discover or witness abuse or someone may report abuse to you.

How you respond to abuse will depend on the type and extent of the abuse and also the context in which the abuse is occurring, e.g. at home, at school or within Korfbal.

False allegations of abuse do occur, but they are rare.

### **5.1 Responding to a Young Person Making a Disclosure or Allegation**

If a child or young person wants to talk about abuse:

- Accept what the child or young person says, keeping calm and looking at them directly.
- Reassure them that they were right to tell you and you believe them
- Reassure them that they are not to blame.
- Make sure that from the outset, you can understand what they are saying.
- Keep any questions to a minimum, but clarify any facts or words that you do not understand – do not speculate or make assumptions. Encourage the child or young person to use their own words. Avoid closed and leading questions.
- Be honest straight away and tell them you cannot make promises that you will not be able to keep.
- Let them know that you need to tell someone else, do not promise confidentiality.
- Let them know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens
- End the disclosure and ensure that they are either being collected or is capable of going home on their own. If it is considered that the person making the disclosure is likely to be at risk by returning home, immediate contact should be made with the Social Services or the Police.
- Make a written record as soon as possible writing down exactly what was said and when he/she said it.  
Record dates and times of these events and keep the hand-written record, even if these are subsequently typed up for an indefinite period. These records must be accurate and factual. A suggested report form is in **Appendix M**.
- The information must be stored securely and confidentially.

#### **DO NOT:**

- Panic – react calmly so as not to frighten the child.
- Allow your shock or distaste to show
- Probe for more information than is offered.
- Make negative comments about the alleged abuser.

It is not your responsibility to decide if child abuse has occurred but it is your responsibility to take action, however small your concern.

### **5.2 Sharing your Concern**

Taking action in cases of child abuse is never easy. In all cases if you are not sure what to do you can gain help from the NSPCC 24 hour telephone on 0808 500 5000, social services or the police.

#### **5.2.1 Sharing with parents**

In many situations, it may be quite appropriate to discuss initial concerns with the parents concerned, e.g. if a child seems withdrawn. You may find out that there has been a bereavement in the family. Alternatively, the discussion may increase your fear that abuse may be happening. If your concerns remain, further advice should be gained from social services.

### **5.2.2 Sharing with professionals**

There will be circumstances in which a young person might be placed at even greater risk if concerns are shared (e.g. if sexual abuse is suspected, if there is a severe risk to the child) and you should discuss your concerns directly with the Social Services duty officer. Social services will advise what to do next, how and when to involve parents and will also take responsibility for ensuring appropriate investigations are undertaken. If a child needs urgent medical attention as a result of suspected abuse, then you must seek this as a matter of urgency. Record carefully what you have heard, seen and done.

### **5.3 Deciding what to do**

It is sometimes difficult to decide what action to take, but it is important to remember that failure to act may place the child at further risk. The important thing is to share your concern and this can always be done with child protection professionals – the NSPCC, Childline or social services.

Consideration should be given on a case by case basis to the support which can be given to an abused child or young person recognising that the support needs to be non-judgemental, appropriate and long term. External help, available through Social Services or other Counselling agencies may be advisable.

Where it is suspected that abuse is occurring outside the sports setting, providing appropriate action is taken (as set out above) it is not necessary to report the abuse to the SKA CPO. Procedures to be followed where poor practice/abuse is suspected by staff / volunteers involved in Korfball are set out in the following section.

## **6. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF OR VOLUNTEERS**

Every individual involved in Korfball is responsible for the welfare of each child in their care and for making others aware of their own responsibilities (e.g. volunteers helping out with trips, tours or social events).

Child abuse can and does occur outside the family setting and it has occurred in sport. It is important that those involved in Korfball are aware of this possibility and that all allegations are taken seriously and appropriate action taken.

Hearing allegations of child abuse against coaches, members of staff or volunteers is distressing. It can raise feelings of anger because the children have placed their trust in adults who have abused the trust, and guilt on the part of other colleagues who may feel they could have done more to stop it happening.

Reporting suspicions, allegations or incidents of abuse against a colleague is equally distressing. It is important however that any concerns for the welfare of the young person arising from abuse or harassment by a Club/Association member should be reported immediately. The SKA will fully support and ensure the anonymity of anyone who, in good faith, reports his/her concern about a colleague's practice or the possibility that a child is being abused.

Where there is a complaint of abuse against a member there may be three types of investigation:

- A criminal investigation (by police)
- A child protection investigation (by social services)
- A disciplinary or misconduct investigation (by the SKA)

Civil proceedings may also be instituted by the person or family of the person who has suffered the alleged abuse.

The results of the police and/or social services investigation may well influence the SKA disciplinary investigation, but not necessarily. Irrespective of the findings of the social services or police enquiries, the SKA will assess all individual cases under the appropriate misconduct/disciplinary procedure. The welfare of the child should always be the first point of consideration, even when there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police or social services.

### **6.1 Action to take if there are concerns**

When reports of misconduct or allegations by a member of staff/volunteer are brought to your attention, a decision must be made as to whether the allegation made is related to poor practice or abuse. If there is any doubt, advice should be sought from the NSPCC or from Social services.

#### **6.1.1 Poor Practice**

If, following consideration, the allegation clearly relates to poor practice the SKA will deal with it as a misconduct issue and will follow the SKA complaints and appeals procedures.

The following process should be followed:

1. Make a record of the allegations.
2. Report to:
  - (a) Club: the Child Protection Officer, Youth Development Officer and Chairperson
  - (b) Area Association: the Child Protection Officer, Youth Development Officer and Chairperson
  - (c) SKA: the Child Protection Officer, Youth Development Officer and General Secretary

3. The SKA will make an immediate decision as to whether any individual person under suspicion of poor practice should be temporarily suspended, pending further investigation. The SKA will also make a decision as to whether to appoint a Disciplinary Commission.

### **6.1.2 Abuse**

If the allegation is abuse, the following process should be followed:

- Make a full record of the allegations or suspicions.
- Report to:
  - (a) Club: the Child Protection Officer, Youth Development Officer and Chairperson
  - (b) Area Association: the Child Protection Officer, Youth Development Officer and Chairperson
  - (c) SKA: the Child Protection Officer, Youth Development Officer and General Secretary
  - (d) the Local Social Services Department (who may involve the police) immediately and make a record of this.
- The parents/carers of the young person will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the Social Services Department.
- The Child Protection Officer, Youth Development Officer and General Secretary of the SKA should always be informed and kept up to date with any local subsequent developments. The SKA will make an immediate decision as to whether any individual person under suspicion of abuse should be temporarily suspended, pending further police and social services enquiries. The SKA will also make a decision as to whether to appoint a Disciplinary Commission.
- The SKA Chairperson will deal with any media enquiries.
- Confidentiality must be maintained.
- Consideration should be given about what support may be appropriate for young people, parents/carers and members.

Any adult can bypass the procedures and share their concerns with an outside agency – Social Services, NSPCC – if they feel that their Child Protection Officer/Committee are not dealing with their concern or are implicated in some way.

## **7. ESTABLISHING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **7.1 Adopt a Policy Statement**

All Clubs must have a policy statement regarding child abuse that must be brought to the attention of all existing and new staff and volunteers.

A policy statement is generally needed by most Clubs to gain acceptance for new procedures and to ensure their effective implementation. A sample statement can be found at **Appendix L**.

To ensure the adoption of these guidelines a proposal will first need to be passed through the Club/Association committee.

The policy statement should be updated regularly to ensure that Korfball continues to be a safe and fun experience for all those involved. Inevitably all policy statements have their limitations – to be effective, the key principles must be acknowledged and accepted by all those involved.

### **7.2 Appoint a Child Protection Officer**

All Clubs should appoint a Child Protection Officer who has responsibility for the co-ordination and implementation of the Club's/Association's Child Protection policy and procedures. The appointment should be ratified by the Club/Association Committee and notified to the Area Association and SKA.

- If possible, the person should be a senior layperson with experience of working in a children/youth/social services context. The person should NOT be the Youth Development Officer, a Youth Coach, or a Manager of a Youth Team.
- The person must be capable of being sympathetic to young people but objective in the pursuance of their task – with an ability to cope with the shock and upset abuse allegations may produce.
- The person must be able to act confidentially, speedily and decisively relating well to statutory authorities, parents/carers etc.
- The person must be willing to undergo training procedures and be prepared to brief staff and the Club/Association committee on appropriate local policies, procedure development and review their effectiveness.
- The person must have clear lines of accountability to the Club/Association Committee and have clear links with coaches, managers and all staff and volunteers.
- The person must have the freedom to act when dealing with abuse cases.
- The person must report cases to the Club Committee, the Area Association and the SKA for monitoring.

The appointment of a Child Protection Officer is key in this process and will encourage good practice throughout the Club/Association by ensuring that everyone is aware of his or her responsibilities.

This role may include leading by example, organising simple training briefings and the use of leaflets/posters and notices throughout the areas used by the Club/Association.

In addition it is the Child Protection Officer's responsibility to ensure that Clubs get all staff and volunteers to complete the appropriate forms (see Appendices). Where possible, Clubs should also display Child Protection material highlighting the child-line phone number.

### **7.3 Appoint a Child Protection Committee**

A group should be formed to:

- Review the current situation and existing policies within the Club/Association
- Identify and establish roles and responsibility
- Determine how the guidelines will be adopted and assign responsibilities
- Establish any training needs (e.g. for committee members)
- Determine a method of monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of the guidelines
- Disseminate up to date information from the SKA.
- 

It is also advisable to work in partnership with other relevant people, e.g. parents, teachers, Local Authority Sports Development Officers, Local Education Authority Representatives, Local Social Services, Sport Scotland Representatives and Sports Coach UK.

### **7.4 Recruitment of staff and volunteers**

Carry out a full recruitment procedure for all staff and volunteers (cf. section 2).

### **7.5 Give all staff and volunteers clear roles**

Coaches, managers and all staff and volunteers should have a clear idea of what is expected of them (cf. section 2.6).

### **7.6 Code of Conduct and practice**

Ensure all staff, volunteers and coaches comply with the agreed Codes of Conduct and practice (**Appendices A and C**).

Staff and volunteers should be aware that their contact with young people in the course of their work with the Club/Association puts them in a relationship of trust (i.e. in a position of power or influence over another by virtue of their work or the nature of the activity).

### **7.7 Plan the work of the Club/Association to minimise situations in which abuse might occur**

All staff and volunteers should be encouraged to demonstrate good practice (cf. section 3). This not only protects the child but also protects coaches from accusations of improper behaviour.

### **7.8 Implement and issue guidelines to all staff and volunteers on how to deal with abuse or suspected abuse**

Ensure that all staff and volunteers receive a copy of this policy and guide. Provide ongoing development and training opportunities to all staff and volunteers through effective provision of information on training courses provided by authorities such as Sport England, Sportscoach UK and the NSPCC.

The Club/Association Child Protection Officer, the Coach and the Manager should all attend the Sportscoach UK workshops entitled "Good Practice and Child Protection" and "Coaching children and Young People". These courses are held at venues across the country on a regular basis.

The courses include:

- A reminder of the volunteer's duty both to prevent abuse and to report any abuse discovered or suspected
- Guidance on what constitutes abuse and how to recognise it
- Some indication of what might happen if the abuse is reported
- Guidance on how to support the abused young person or child

It is recommended that a record is kept of training and that refresher training takes place regularly.

**7.9 Introduce a system where children can talk to an independent person outside the club or organisation**

Arrange for a person to be available for children and young people to talk to if they feel they have been abused in any way. The person should be totally independent and someone to whom they can easily relate. It may be necessary or appropriate to ask someone from a different Association/Club to undertake this role.

If this is done, the appointed person must be given clear, written guidelines as to what actions to take to stop any abuse disclosed by a young person, otherwise they may unwittingly permit the abuse to continue. It is strongly recommended that contacts should be by telephone rather than face to face. Consider ways of letting children and young people know that such a person is available for them to talk to.

Make sure that all adults working with children and young people know the name of a suitable person with whom they could put the child or young person in contact or to whom they could turn for help.