



Information for Welfare Officers

Welfare covers a range of issues such as safeguarding and protecting children, anti-bullying, equity, poor practice in coaching and disciplinary and grievances matters. It encompasses policies and procedures to set out minimum standards of expectations, such as codes of conduct, procedures to follow for dealing with child protection concerns, other welfare issues or complaints, and to ensure that EA, clubs and associations meet their statutory responsibilities to safeguard and protect children. Welfare is essential to contribute to good practice within the sport, develop performance and to ensure the safety and enjoyment of athletes, coaches, officials and volunteers. It is everyone's responsibility to ensure the welfare of all those who participate in athletics.

The key roles and responsibilities are set out below:

Athletics Clubs

- Every athletics club should appoint at least one Welfare Officer, preferably two, one male and one female and they should notify EA of the name and contact details for each Welfare Officer.
- ALL club officer and committee members have responsibility to uphold the welfare policies and procedures, to adhere to good practice and to support the club Welfare Officer to respond to any suspected breaches. This is NOT the sole responsibility of the Welfare Officer.
- Under the Welfare Policies and Procedures, if there is any concern about child abuse the Welfare Officer should be informed immediately. If the Welfare Officer is not available, the person with concerns should report the matter to the local Children's services or police themselves.
- The Welfare Officer, club officers and committee members should ensure that information is available at the club and to all club officers, team managers, coaches and officials regarding contact details for local Children's services, the police and the NSPCC.
- The club officers and committee members should ensure there are club disciplinary procedures to deal with issues of misconduct which are not child abuse.
- All club officers and committee members should ensure that club members, coaches, club officers and committee members attend recommended training in welfare and safeguarding and protecting children as appropriate, comply with requirements to obtain CRB and Independent Safeguarding Authority checks (when required after July 2010) and that all coaches/volunteers/helpers complete volunteer reference forms or comply with a club volunteer recruitment process.

Club Welfare Officers

- The Welfare Officer's role is to advise and support the club officers and committee to implement welfare policies and procedures and to support the club to adhere to codes of conduct and good practice.
- The Welfare Officer's role is to ensure that all club coaches/helpers/volunteers have completed a volunteer reference form or complied with a volunteer recruitment process and assist in this process as appropriate and to ensure that all coaches/officials/volunteers have completed CRB and Independent Safeguarding Authority checks as required and assist in this process as appropriate. (N.B. The Independent Safeguarding Authority is a new government body that should start

processing checks in July 2010 but checks should be managed by UKA under their current CRB procedures)

- The Welfare Officer's role is to respond to suspected breaches of the Welfare Policies and Procedures that may be referred to them, in accordance with the Welfare Procedures and, to advise and support other club officers or committee members how to respond appropriately in accordance with the Procedures.
- The Welfare Officer should report any concerns about child abuse to local children's social care services or police immediately. If the Welfare Officer is not available, the person with concerns should report the matter to the local children's services or police themselves.
- The Welfare Officer should also report any concerns about child abuse to both the UKA Welfare Officer and the EA Welfare Officer and inform them what action has been taken.
- The Welfare Officer is advised to inform the EA Welfare Officer about any concerns regarding misconduct which is not child abuse.
- The Welfare Officer should have attended Safeguarding and Protecting Children Training and Time to Listen Training for Club Welfare Officers within the last 3 years. (N.B. Time to Listen is a course that is currently being developed by England Athletics and the Child Protection in Sport Unit and will be offered to all club welfare officers when available from 2010)