



Safeguarding & Welfare Policy

Policy Statement

Bristol & West Athletic Club believes that everyone involved in athletics should enjoy their participation and development in safety and security and with protection from abuse, maltreatment or misconduct. Every individual involved in athletics events and programmes is responsible for upholding this belief.

Bristol & West AC accepts the moral and legal responsibility to implement procedures to provide a duty of care for all people (including children) within the sport, safeguard their well-being and protect them from abuse

- As a club we respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of people taking part in athletics including young people, disabled and vulnerable adults
- We will ensure our staff and volunteers adopt best practice in all equality issues, to safeguard and protect young people from abuse, and themselves against false allegations
- The club requires staff/ volunteers to adopt and abide by the Safeguarding & Welfare Policy
- As a club we will respond swiftly and appropriately to any allegations and implement the relevant investigatory, disciplinary and appeals procedures.
- Bristol & West AC reviews the effectiveness of its policies and activities each year at the Annual General Meeting.

This policy statement applies to anyone working on behalf of Bristol & West AC, including committee members, coaches, team managers and members.

The club's role in keeping children and vulnerable adults safe will be achieved by:

- appointing at least one Club Welfare Officer (CWO) who will take specific responsibility for welfare issues and act as the main point of contact for individuals.
- supporting the Club Welfare Officer in attending any local or regional course held by the appropriate organisations on the practical implementation of the policy
- accepting that all officers and committee members have responsibilities for upholding the policy and procedures and for responding to any suspected breaches of it
- ensuring that the club will not work with people who are deemed to be a risk to children or adults.

- involving children, their carers and adult members, wherever possible, in the development of policies, procedures, codes of conduct and the general implementation of welfare
- challenging and amending poor practice (see Codes of Conduct)
- implementing appropriate recommendations from UKA relating to welfare and/or child protection
- working with statutory services, through the club CWO or a member of the Management Committee in the absence of the CWO, to inform them without delay of a concern when child protection is identified. If the concern is about the CWO, then the person with concerns or being informed of them should immediately contact their local authority's Children's Services (Local Area Designated Officer, LADO) or the Police and then inform the UKA Welfare Officer.
- ensuring that contact details for Children's Services, the police and NSPCC are made available to all club organisers, coaches and officials (see below).
- maintaining the confidentiality of those disclosing misconduct, those accused of misconduct and any alleged victims.
- appointing a disciplinary panel for general misconduct cases (non welfare) and operate this in accordance with the Disciplinary policy.
- referring disciplinary cases in relation to athletics welfare to the UKA welfare team and referring other disciplinary cases to a panel as appropriate.

The role of the Club Welfare Officer is to:

- To take the lead in ensuring that appropriate arrangements for keeping children, young people and vulnerable adults safe are in place within Bristol & West AC.
- To promote the safety and welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in Bristol & West AC activities at all times.

They will achieve this by:

1. Advising and supporting 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.
2. Making sure that all safeguarding and child protection issues concerning children, young people and vulnerable adults who take part in Bristol & West AC activities are responded to appropriately through policies, procedures and administrative systems.
3. Ensuring that all club coaches / helpers / volunteers have completed a volunteer recruitment process which includes volunteer reference forms & DBS checks (where required).
4. Responding to suspected breaches of the Welfare Policies and Procedures that may be referred to them, in accordance with the club's Welfare Procedures, and to advise and support other club officers or committee members on how to respond appropriately in accordance with the procedures

5. Making sure that everyone working or volunteering with or for children, young people and vulnerable adults at Bristol & West AC, understands the child protection procedures and knows what to do if they have concerns about a child's welfare.
6. Making sure children, young people and vulnerable adults who are involved in activities at Bristol & West AC and their parents/ carers know who they can talk to if they have a welfare concern and understand what action the organisation will take in response.
7. Receiving and recording information from anyone who has concerns about a child or vulnerable adult who takes part in Bristol & West AC activities.
8. Taking the lead on responding to information that may constitute a child protection concern. This includes:
 - assessing and clarifying the information
 - making referrals to statutory organisations as appropriate
 - consulting with and informing the relevant members of the organisation's management committee.
 - following the organisation's safeguarding policy and procedures.
9. Liaising with, passing on information to and receiving information from statutory child protection agencies such as:
 - the local authority child protection services
 - the police.
 This includes making formal referrals to agencies when necessary.
10. Reporting any concerns about child abuse to the UKA Lead Safeguarding Officer in the first instance. For out of office hours reports, they will contact local children's social care services or the police immediately for advice if a child is at risk.
11. Consulting the appropriate governing bodies (UK Athletics) when support is needed.
12. Reporting regularly to the management committee on issues relating to safeguarding and child protection, to ensure that child protection is seen as a priority issue.
13. Being familiar with and working within inter-agency child protection procedures developed by the local child protection agencies.
14. Being familiar with issues relating to child protection and abuse, and keeping up to date with new developments in this area.
15. Attending regular training in issues relevant to child protection and sharing knowledge from that training with everyone who works or volunteers with children, young people and vulnerable adults at Bristol & West AC.

Related Policies & Procedures

This policy statement should be read alongside our organisational policies and procedures, including:

- Club Codes of Conduct
- UKA Whistleblowing Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Photography Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy Statement

Contact Details

Club Welfare Officer

Name: Emma Withers

Email: safeguarding@bristolandwestac.org

Club Welfare Officer

Name: Paul Jefferson

Email: safeguarding@bristolandwestac.org

For further contact details please see the “**Report a Concern Flowchart**” in the members area.

Club Chair

Name: Maria Townsend

Email: chair@bristolandwestac.org

Local Authority Children's Services

Bristol

0117 903 6444

North Somerset

01275 888 808

South Gloucestershire

01454 866 000

Bath & North East Somerset

01225 396312

Out of Hours & Weekends for any of the above authorities

01454 615 165

In an emergency ring 999

NSPCC Helpline

0808 800 5000

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually. This policy was last reviewed on 15th June 2021.

Signed:

Emma Withers

Paul Jefferson