



Wycombe Phoenix Harriers Welfare Policy incorporating Codes of Conduct and Child Protection

The aims of the club in relation to their athletics welfare policies are to:

1. Ensure the highest possible standards of safety and welfare for all athletes of all ages and others engaged in Club activities and events, especially children and vulnerable adults.
2. Embed a process of continuous improvement in our ongoing work on welfare in the sport.
3. Ensure that quality assured training is offered to all staff and volunteers engaged in athletics programmes, either directly or through the appropriate agencies such as the NSPCC, the CPSU, SCUK, UKA or Sport England.
4. Adopt and promote good practice in the welfare and protection of athletes and other athletics personnel.
5. Demonstrate ethical standards of leadership and behaviour in all work.

Principles

Safety – The welfare of the athlete will always be paramount.

Equity – The right of everyone involved in athletics to equitable treatment, regardless of age, sex, race, religion, ability, sexual orientation or social background, will be upheld.

Responsiveness – All allegations or suspicions of abuse or violations of athlete welfare will be taken seriously and acted upon appropriately and speedily. Those found to be spreading malicious or false allegations will be disciplined according to the relevant procedures.

Consent – Parents/carers or those *in loco parentis* will be consulted if it becomes necessary to invoke the 'Athletics Welfare' procedures.

Compliance with the statutory system – The Club will operate within the law, including guidelines and rules set down by the Criminal Records Bureau and the Home Office. Where appropriate the club will work in partnership with Social Services Departments, Police Child Protection Units, ACPCs, the CPSU and other relevant agencies in order to ensure compliance with this policy.

Fairness - The human rights of staff, coaches, athletes or volunteers facing allegations will be embodied in disciplinary and appeals procedures.

Scope

All people involved in athletics need to respond to four main dimensions of athlete welfare and protection by:

1. **recognising and referring** to the appropriate agency anyone who has been subjected to poor practice, abuse or misconduct by someone else, whether *inside* sport (by another staff member or athlete) or *outside* sport (such as the family or peer group);
2. **observing and encouraging good practice** when working with athletes in order to avoid perpetrating poor practice, abuse or other types of misconduct;
3. **taking precautions to avoid false allegations** against themselves;
4. **safeguarding the good name and integrity of the sport of athletics.**

The 'golden rule' for all involved in athletics in relation to welfare and protection is that it is not your responsibility to judge whether or not a welfare violation has taken place but it is your responsibility to act on any concerns you may have.

Athletes should:

- treat others with the same respect and fairness that you wish to receive
- uphold the same values off the field as you do when engaged in athletics
- anticipate your own needs, be organised and on time
- thank those who help you participate in athletics
- inform your coach of any other coaching you are receiving
- show patience with and respect diversity in others
- act with dignity at all times
- inform your coach of any illness, medical condition or disability that needs to be taken into consideration for athletic training or performance
- notify a responsible adult if you have to go somewhere (why, where and when you will return)
- not respond if someone seeks private information, unrelated to athletics e.g. home life
- use safe transport or travel arrangements
- avoid destructive behaviour and leave athletics venues as you find them
- never engage in any illegal or irresponsible behaviour
- challenge anyone whose behaviour falls below the expected standards of 'Athletics Welfare'
- speak out immediately if anything makes you concerned or uncomfortable (telling your parents/carers and or the Club Welfare Officer) or if you suspect a club mate has suffered from misconduct by someone else
- not use bad language.
- Be aware that any breaches of code of conduct may be reported to the Club Committee and may result in their expulsion from the club

Parents / carers should:

- treat others with the same respect and fairness that you wish to receive
- check out the people who are coaching or managing your child
- take an active interest in your child's participation
- attend training and competitions whenever possible
- ensure that your child does not take unnecessary valuable items to training or competition
- know exactly where your child will be at all times and who they are with
- return a written informed consent form to the Club/Team Manager/Chaperone, including next of kin details, health and medical requirements, before your child goes to any 'away' events
- inform your child's coach of any illness, medical condition or disability that needs to be taken into consideration for athletic training or performance
- provide any necessary medication that your child needs for the duration of any trips
- **never make assumptions about your child's safety**

The Club will:

- appoint a Welfare Officer and notify AAAE and territory association of their name and contact details.
- the Welfare Officer will provide the first point of contact in cases of concern about athletes welfare.
- accept that all officers and Committee members have responsibilities for upholding the Policy and for responding to any suspected breaches of it
- amend poor practice
- implement recommendations as appropriate from UKA and AAAE relating to welfare and/or child protection
- carry out their duty of care within relevant legislation and government guidance concerning child protection issues.
- Ensure that all staff operating within the club environment hold the appropriate qualifications.
- maintain confidentiality of those disclosing, those accused of misconduct and any alleged victims
- refer to the committee (the clubs governing body) any disciplinary matters for consideration and action.

The Team Manager should:

- *Act in loco parentis* for any athletes below the age of 18 at events.
- *Look after young athletes personal safety at event venues.*
- Provide the appropriate ratio of staff for the age and ability of the athletes e.g. a minimum of one adult member of staff for every 10 children who may be travelling away from the home venue.
- Provide staff of the same sex i.e. avoid cross sex chaperoning.
- If required comply with any local Duty of Care and/or Child Protection Policies and procedures that may be in place e.g. Local Authority or school procedures that cover particular venues or athlete groups.
- Notify all parents/carers of athletes under 18 of the times and venues of any competitions and of appropriate telephone numbers.
- Liaise with young athletes' parents/carers if they become involved in an accident or a serious breach of safety or discipline while under your care.

Officials and Helpers should:

- Put the safety of athletes first.
- Offer an encouraging and positive environment.
- Use appropriate language and behaviour.
- Show integrity and professionalism in your dealings with other adults.
- Give equal treatment and respect to all.

Coaches should:

- respect the rights, dignity and worth of every athlete and treat everyone equally, regardless of background or ability
- place the welfare and safety of the athlete above the development of performance
- develop appropriate working relationships with athletes (especially under 18s), based on mutual trust and respect
- not exert undue influence to obtain personal benefit or reward
- encourage and guide athletes to accept and take responsibility for their own behaviour and performance and give them as much autonomy as appropriate.
- never do something for an athlete that they can do for themselves (In the case of some disabled athletes or vulnerable adults tasks of a personal nature may be requested or necessary. In such cases, the full understanding and consent of the parent or carer should be sought and the individual's autonomy and dignity should be respected.)
- avoid critical language or actions, such as sarcasm, that undermine an athlete's self-esteem
- not spend time alone with a young athlete unless clearly in view of others
- avoid taking a young athlete alone in your car
- never invite a young athlete alone to your home
- never engage in physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay, or share a bedroom with a child
- always explain why and ask for consent before touching an athlete
- work in same-sex pairs when supervising changing areas
- ensure that parents/carers know about and have approved in advance if taking a young athlete away from the usual training venue
- respect the right of young athletes to an independent life outside athletics
- make sure you are appropriately qualified for activities that you coach and update your licence and education as and when required by UK Athletics
- adopt safe training regimes appropriate to the age, stage of development and capacity of the athlete
- at the outset, clarify with athletes (and where appropriate their parents or carers) exactly what is expected of them and what performers are entitled to expect from you
- never try to recruit, either overtly or covertly, athletes who are already receiving coaching
- co-operate fully with other colleagues (e.g. other coaches, officials, team managers, sport scientists, doctors, physiotherapists, governing body staff) in the best interests of the athlete
- consistently promote positive aspects of the sport (e.g. fair play) and never condone rule violations or the use of prohibited or age-inappropriate substances
- strictly maintain a clear boundary between friendship and intimacy with athletes
- challenge inappropriate behaviour or language by others
- report any accidental injury, distress or misunderstanding or misinterpretation. A brief written report of such incidents should be submitted to the Welfare Officer as soon as possible, and parents/carers notified.
- report any suspected misconduct by other coaches or athletics personnel
- consistently display high standards of behaviour and appearance