



play sport stay safe



SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY



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Foreword

The MC Federation Ltd (MCF) Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy 2014 replaces previous Child Protection Policies of the MCF. MCF policies and procedures are compiled with the aid of government guidance 'Child Protection in Sport Unit – Standards for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport'.

The need for standards was identified in the Child Protection in Sport Action Plan published in 2000. Initial work was done by Sport England governing body services, who consulted on Towards a Standard for Sport. This work was taken forward and built on by the Sport Task Force on policy and standards, whose membership is listed at the end of the above mentioned document.

The key elements of safeguarding include the protection of children* from abuse and neglect, the prevention of practices that may be detrimental to children's health and well-being and ensuring a safe and effective environment for young people.

As MCF is a UK wide Governing Body of Sport with affiliated clubs and organisers in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, it is imperative that the policy meets the legal requirements of all home countries. MCF policy is based on the English guidance and legislation but, in the light of the common principles and similar approaches taken by all home countries, most of the procedures in this document are fully applicable to all members and affiliated organisations. Any necessary differences have been highlighted in the document and reference made to any complementary home country policy/procedures.

The development of the policy is one of the core functions for MCF in its role to support clubs to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This reflects the fact that anyone who provides or delivers sporting activities has a duty of care towards the young people who are participating in the sport.

The policy is an open working document and will be continually updated in line with any changes in guidance, law and legalisation.

Definitions

The key definitions shown below are taken from 'Standards for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport' document.

*The terms "children and young people" and "children" will be used interchangeably in the text to refer to those under 18 years of age. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age is living independently or is in further education, does not change their status or entitlement to services or protection under the Children Act 1989.

Harm may result from sexual exploitation, physical abuse or emotional abuse or neglect, harm from bad practice or undue pressure that affects the child/young person's health and development. Decisions may be about whether to allow the use of facilities, funding or affiliation, for example. Reference to 'Standards' refers to 'Child Protection in Sport Unit – Standards for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport'.

The term MCF will refer to the MC Federation Ltd.

The term GM will refer to the General Manager of the MCF.

Club refers to any affiliated body, club, organiser or individual of the MCF.

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Introduction to MC Federation Safeguarding Policy

Sporting activities can provide valuable life experiences for young people, and have the potential to offer significant opportunities for children to develop social skills, self-esteem and confidence qualities that develop a well-rounded individual. MCF is fully committed to supporting all young people to fulfil their potential in the sport both directly through MCF run activities and indirectly through affiliated clubs and coaches. It is recognised that the provision of a positive environment where young people are protected from harm is critical to ensure the best possible outcomes for young people and conducive to promoting high performance. Thus safeguarding the welfare of children needs to be a priority for everyone involved in the promotion of sporting activities.

People who have regular contact with young people are ideally placed to recognise signs that a child may be being abused and take appropriate steps to report these concerns. MCF accepts that the welfare and safety of young people is the responsibility of everyone in the sport, whether paid staff or volunteers. Coaches and officials may be best placed to help in identifying welfare concerns, and indicators of possible abuse or neglect, at an early stage and referring those concerns to MCF and the appropriate statutory organisation. It is therefore essential that anyone in contact with young people through their involvement in sport is fully aware of the common indicators of abuse and how to respond to concerns.

MCF, and its affiliates, have a duty of care towards young people and is committed to providing information and training opportunities to make certain that those working with children adopt best practice to ensure the safety and welfare of the participants. It is imperative that everyone involved in the sport understands their roles and responsibilities and those of others in relation to safeguarding children. Safeguarding must form an integral part of the MCF and clubs activities and be creating an environment where young people can thrive and realise their potential.

Working with the Standards ensures that the MCF is part of a national benchmark of good practice and work towards the purpose of which is:

- To help create a safe sporting environment for children and young people¹ and protect them from harm.
- To provide a benchmark to assist those involved in sport to make informed decisions.³
- To promote good practice and challenge practice that is harmful to children.

Principles

The Standards provide the overall framework on which the MCF policy is based. In line with this guidance, the MCF policy recognises that: -

- Children and young people have a right to enjoy sport, free from all forms of abuse and exploitation.
- All children and young people have equal rights to protection from harm.
- All children and young people should be encouraged to fulfil their potential and inequalities should be challenged.
- Everybody has a responsibility to support the care and protection of children.
- Sporting organisations have a duty of care to children and young people who take part in sport.

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The Standards are an overarching guidance document, which are intended to be relevant to all sports at all levels. They apply to any sporting activity that takes place in an organised setting. The MCF has used the standards to set out a policy relevant to the sports in which it is involved.

Policy Statement

The MCF is committed to the Safeguarding of all children in sport and has put together this policy as a reference for all for its affiliated clubs, organisers and coaches as well as all staff, whether employed or volunteers, as a term of reference for all matters concerned with best practice in the safeguarding of children from harm.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the government 'Working together to Safeguard Children' document where there is a specific need or action required

Objectives of this policy

- All staff, volunteers, members and parents should have an understanding of what abuse is.
- All staff, volunteers and members should know what the MCF policy is on any form of abuse, and follow it when abuse is reported.
- All children and parents should know what the MCF policy is on abuse and what they need to do should abuse arise.
- As a club you take bullying and abuse seriously. Children and parents should be assured that they would be supported when abuse is reported.
- Any form of abuse will not be tolerated

MCF is committed to providing a supportive, friendly, safe and positive environment free of offensive or abusive behaviour through its network of members, clubs and staff.

Legislation

There are a number of pieces of legislation that impact on the policy and procedures such as:

Children and Young Persons Act 1933
 Children Act 1989
 United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child 1989
 Human rights Act 1998
 Children's Commissioner for Wales Act 2001
 Commissioner for Children and Young People (NI) Order 2003)
 Commissioner for Children and Young People (Scotland) Order 2003)
 Children Act (England 2004)
 Education Act 2002

Legislation to protect children from adults who pose a risk

Sex Offenders Act 1997
 Protection of Children Act 1999
 Sexual Offences Act 2003
 Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004
 Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (England, Wales and Northern Ireland)
 Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007

To see the full list of the Laming Report 5B Recommendations see link:

<http://www.familylawweek.co.uk/site.aspx?i=ed33471>

Vetting and Barring Scheme

The Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) has been created to help prevent unsuitable people from working with children and vulnerable adults. This is done by working in partnership with the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and other delivery partners.

Increased safeguards have now been introduced under the Vetting and Barring Scheme, from October 12th 2009:

It is now a criminal offence for individuals barred by the ISA to work or apply to work with children or vulnerable adults in a wide range of posts. Employers also face criminal sanctions for knowingly employing a barred individual across a wider range of work;

The three former barred lists (POCA, POVA and List 99) are being replaced by two new ISA-barred lists;

Employers, local authorities, professional regulators and other bodies have a duty to refer to the ISA, information about individuals working with children or vulnerable adults where they consider them to have caused harm or pose a risk of harm.

Responsibilities for Safeguarding

MCF is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children engaged in the sport and has prepared a clear policy and associated mandatory procedures that provide a framework for any club or individual working with children.

The overall responsibility for safeguarding children in the MCF rests with the General Manager (GM) and the Director, who are fully committed to ensuring the welfare and interests of young people are central to all decision making and programmes.

MCF recognises that it has a duty to help ensure members accept their responsibilities through the provision of clear guidance and instruction. MCF guidance has been formulated with the underlying aim of minimising risk to children and wherever possible, avoiding situations where it is known that abuse or neglect can occur.

MCF, as a regulator for sports in the UK, will ensure that all allegations or suspicions of abuse or significant harm to any child are reported to the Police and/or Social Care Services department. MCF will share all relevant information with the respective statutory child protection agencies (children's social care services and/or police) without delay and within agreed protocols.

MCF will ensure that it fulfils its responsibilities to work jointly with others to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and will determine;

- The referral route for all cases that deal with the welfare of children
- Whether suspension of MCF membership is required
- The appropriate course of remedial action

MCF will comply with the principles set out in the Data Protection Act 1998 and Information Sharing for Practitioners (HM Government, 2006) in relation to confidentiality and information sharing.

Information that is confidential in nature may be shared without consent where there is a legitimate and lawful reason for disclosure.

Procedures

The MCF will determine the referral route for all cases put forward that deal with the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. Consideration will be given to any signed written evidence including any written representation from the accused. (Any preliminary collection of information will be carried out by the GM)

Within seven (7) days, GM shall write to the accused to notify them of any investigation that is to take place, the nature of the investigation and the reasons for this.

The Director will sit outside of this procedure and cannot intervene in any decisions unless there has been concern raised about a significant prior relationship, connection or interest between the accused and the GM.

Where abuse is suspected and any delay in action may compromise the welfare of a child, MCF is authorised to inform the relevant Children's Social Care services/Social services or police.

The GM must be consulted within ten working days of the receipt of any referral where it is unclear if a case should be considered potential poor practice. Although it is not the responsibility of the GM to decide if abuse has taken place, the GM must quickly decide if the case needs to be referred to social services or the police.

Any case that has already been referred to the police or Children's Social Care service/Social services will only be considered in relation to whether suspension from MCF is required. Anyone who is convicted of a child protection related offence or receives a caution in respect of an offence will be deemed to be in breach of the MCF Rules.

In cases of potential poor practice or where convictions information is received from a CRB disclosure, the GM may decide on an appropriate course of action. Any actions will be reached after a fair appraisal of the case and will be in proportion with the severity of the incident. Previous allegations of a similar nature will also be considered.

Possible Actions

- a. Recommendation that no further action taken
- b. A warning and remedial action plan
- c. Referral out/back to Club to deal with advice on how to proceed
- d. Further Enquiries/interviews
- e. Recommendation made to Director to suspend member
- f. Referral to the Independent Safeguarding Authority.

The GM should declare immediately (to the Director) any significant prior relationship, connection or interest which could disqualify them from any discussion on the referral pathway of a case.

Any concerns over the independence of the GM on a case-to-case basis should be raised with the Director. This can be done without fear of victimisation or reprisal.

All GM decisions will be documented and made available to the Director for information and any necessary further action.

An individual has the right to appeal against any course of action determined by the GM. This must be done within ten working days of receipt of any correspondence informing the individual of the decision reached by the GM.

All case information is regarded as highly confidential and should not be disclosed except when it is relevant to inform an external agency.

Club Responsibilities

All clubs who provide services to children or young people have a common law duty of care to take such steps to ensure that the young person is safe. The MCF policy and procedures sets out the minimum standards that affiliates should adopt. The adoption of these procedures will ensure that clubs fulfil their duty of care towards young people.

All affiliates must ensure that: -

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- The overall responsibility for safeguarding lays at the most senior level of the organisation.
- There is at least one individual designated within the club to take the lead role in dealing with safeguarding issues.
- All staff and volunteers who are working directly or indirectly with children receive appropriate training and have access to advice on child protection and safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children through the club.
- All young people and their parents are aware of behaviour that is not acceptable and how they can help to keep themselves safe.
- They adopt the MCF whistle blowing procedures and steps are taken to ensure members, their parents/guardians and others feel able to raise concerns without fear of negative repercussions.
- Confidentiality is maintained in relation to concerns and referrals and information is only shared on a 'need to know' basis.
- Work in partnership with MCF to ensure poor practice is addressed and any required remedial action is taken.

It is not the role of club officials to investigate possible abuse or neglect; however they have a key role to play by referring concerns about those issues to MCF on the appropriate forms and providing information required for further investigations.

Indicators of Abuse

It is important to acknowledge that the majority of children do not find it easy to disclose their concerns and that some groups in society will find it harder than others.

Children from ethnic minority groups have also been found to be at greater risk of abuse because of a failure to respond to abusive practices or neglect. This failure has been attributed to causes such as racial stereotyping, language barriers and cultural, racial or religious misunderstanding or misinterpretation.

It is known that the majority of referrals to the statutory agencies are from adults who are expressing concerns for a child or children identified by them as a result of the child's behaviour or presentation. The referrals made to MCF are also predominantly made by concerned adults. However, it is critical that clubs treat with the utmost seriousness all reports of observed or identified indicators of possible abuse and respond appropriately.

Abuse is not always easy to identify, however some signs may not have an obvious explanation and may indicate that a child may be being abused.

Some indicators of abuse are:

- The child discloses a concern and describes what may be an abusive act.
- Another person raises concern about the wellbeing of a child or young person.
- Physical injury where the explanation given is inconsistent.
- Unexplained changes in behaviour such as a child becoming withdrawn, quiet or aggressive/verbally violent.
- Physical appearance becomes unkempt.
- The child or young person is prevented from socialising with other children.
- The child or young person displays a distrust of adults.

This is not an exhaustive list of indicators and alone cannot be seen to be definitive proof a child or young person is being abused.

The MCF does not expect the adults involved in the sport to decide whether a child has been abused but it is everyone's responsibility to act upon their concerns and report any incident immediately.

Photography and use of Imagery

General Principles concerning the use of Photographs or Recorded Images

Implicit within the MCF policies and procedures for the protection of Children is the commitment to ensure that all publications and media represent participants appropriately and with due respect. It is not the intention of the MCF to prevent parents from taking pictures of their children or competitors but rather to ensure that photographic practices are carefully managed and effective prevention measures in place to deter anyone with undesirable intentions from taking and publishing inappropriate images.

All clubs must understand and comply with the following guidelines:

- A photograph, video clip or other image may be published whether in print or electronically (e.g. on a website) without written consent from the competitor concerned (or in the case of a child from their parent or guardian), following permission given as part of the licencing procedure. Personal information of the individual, other than their name and their club, should not accompany the image.
- While some editing of images is acceptable, images taken of competitors should not be modified, merged or manipulated in a way, which might cause embarrassment or distress to the subject or cause the final image to be inappropriate.
- Care must be taken to ensure that images of children who are under a court order are not recorded or published without permission.
- Any instance of the use or publication of inappropriate images of competitors should be reported to the MCF who may then inform the appropriate authorities.
- Clubs are recommended to introduce a consent form, ideally as part of the process applied when a competitor joins the club, concerning the taking of images for publicity purposes.

The MCF recognises that there is a potential for abuse of any image placed on the Internet or within other forms of media. Although the exploitation of such images may be rare, MCF has a responsibility to provide guidance on how images of young people should be used to reduce the risk of potential 'grooming'. Those creating or administering websites should carefully monitor their content to eliminate the use of inappropriate images or improper text. When determining whether it is appropriate to publish a photograph on a website or another form of media, consideration should be given to both the potential for inappropriate use of an image and the possibility that an individual could make contact with a child by using any personal and club details placed on line.

The following steps can be taken to reduce the risk from the publication of imagery:

- Do not use any personal details if it is possible from the image to ascertain a specific location or there are any details on your site about the venue.
- If it is not possible to ascertain any location, consider using a first name only next to an image.
- The dress of a child should be considered when using the photo:
 - If it is a posed shot for example taken during a medal presentation, try to ensure that the child is fully clothed in suitable attire.
- Do not use images that can appear staged and potentially provocative.

Photography and the use of Imagery Policy and Procedures

MCF should be informed of any inappropriate use of imagery on websites or any other form of media, which is not in keeping with this guidance. Anyone discovering a child's image that appears to be being used illegally on any website, should report the matter to the police.

Photography at Events

MCF does not wish to discourage the use of video or photographic equipment at events for appropriate use, but will take all reasonable precautions to protect members against the possible inappropriate use of films or photographic images. MCF therefore requires those organising events to regulate the taking of photographs and apply, as a minimum, these guidelines.

Training sessions within Clubs or at other venues are not normally public events at which participants would reasonably expect to be photographed. It is the responsibility of the senior coach present to regulate the taking of photos in this environment and photos should not be taken without the senior coach's permission. Coaches giving permission should apply, with any necessary adaptations, the same principles underlying the conditions applicable to photography in other circumstances.

If the event organiser/welfare officer (or authorised representative of the event organiser/welfare officer) suspects inappropriate photography or filming, the officer/organiser should exercise her/his powers under the Conditions to request the person to leave the venue and to surrender any film or delete any images relating to the event. Any person present at an event that has any concerns about any images being taken by any person should bring them to the attention of the competition organiser or other designated person.

Additional provisions and accreditation procedures are in force regulating the taking of photographs for commercial use or for publication by means of the Press signing on forms.

Use of videos as an aid to coaching

The use of video equipment can be a valuable aid to coaching. The guidelines below should be implemented to safeguard against inappropriate practice.

- Ensure that the participants and their parent/guardian are aware of the purpose of the filming as a coaching aid and consent is obtained.
- Ensure that the person designated for participants' welfare and one other responsible and approved adult is present to ensure that performers are protected against inappropriate filming.

Care should be taken to securely store the video materials to avoid inappropriate usage.

Running a Safe Organisation Policy and Procedures**Licencing**

All competitors **MUST** complete either an annual licence or a one event licence application form. The type of information that should be collected at the point of registration would include:

- Name and address
- Date of birth
- Parent/Guardian information
- Contacts
- Medical details – allergies, existing conditions
- Information on any disability or special needs.
- Medical consent
- Consent for participation.
- Consent to photography for publicity purposes

Running a Safe Club Policy and Procedures

Parental Consent should always be sought prior to participation in 'regular club activity' in way of the signing on sheets.

Additional informed consent must also be sought in the following circumstances:

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- For participation in other activities beyond regular training & competitions, e.g. open days
- For using membership information for other reasons beyond that this was originally collected.

Safeguarding Information

It is very important that members and/or their parents/guardians are given access to information about the club's approach to safeguarding. The Safeguarding policy and procedures will be distributed with all annual licences and be available from the MCF website. The information will include contact information for the GM to which any concerns with regard to abuse, poor practice or the policy should be directed

The sports that the MCF are involved with inherently involve the danger of injury to competitors, however if a child is at risk of significant harm or has been harmed in connection with their participation other than the accepted risks, the parent/guardian should contact the GM who has the responsibility of referring any concerns of possible abuse to Children's Social Care Services/Social Services and/or the Police. Alternatively the parent/guardian can contact Children's Social Care Services/Social Services and/or the Police direct. It is requested that where a parent/guardian has made a direct referral to Children's Social Care Services/Social Services and/or the Police, that the MCF GM is provided with the details of the concern as soon as possible so that any necessary action can be taken to safeguard all children in the sport.

The MCF also clearly outline the expectations that it has of its members and their parents/guardians in the code of conduct.

Parental responsibilities

Parents play an important role in the success of their child. With the right kind of support and encouragement, young people will progress steadily and enjoy a rewarding experience. It is likely that with the right support at home alongside a positive club environment a child will remain in the sport.

It is good practice to clearly outline what is expected of parents when their child joins the club.

Other responsibilities

- If parents wish to raise a concern about their children's welfare, they should contact the club Welfare Officer. If they feel they are unable to discuss this concern with the Club Welfare Officer, they should contact the MCF for advice.
- If parents do have concerns about the coaching that their child is receiving they should arrange to meet with the coach involved. Coaches should always have the best interests of the participant in mind. A disagreement with a coach should never be made known to the child as this could destroy a positive relationship between coach and participant.
- If parents wish to make a complaint about any matter other than safeguarding or child protection, they should put the complaint in writing and address it to the GM.
- Parents of any competitor under the age of eighteen years will be informed in writing if their child is subject to any disciplinary action.
- Parents are welcome to observe training but they should not interfere or interrupt the session. It is imperative that coaches have the child's full attention at this time. Any parent who disrupts training may be refused future access.
- During competitions parents and family members should adopt a positive and sporting attitude and remain in the spectator area, and not enter the competition arena. They should never dispute results and rulings of judges, coaches and officials or behave in an inappropriate way towards other spectators.
- All families are encouraged to participate in Club related activities.

Parental Code of Conduct

Parents should: -

- Ensure that they and their children abide by MCF and club rules.
- Ensure that their children arrive at training and competitions on time and are accompanied at all times. Parents should not put coaches in a difficult position by requesting that they provide transport for their children although on occasion the coach may make arrangements to transport groups of riders together, subject to parental consent.
- Ensure that they and their children are aware of the identity of the Club Welfare Officer.
- Be patient with their children's progress. Competitors progress according to their age, ability and stage of maturation. Parents should bear in mind that long-term improvement is the ultimate goal and that later developers often succeed.
- Be a supportive and a stabilising influence through the inevitable ups and downs of training and competition. Parents should encourage their children and provide positive feedback.
- Leave the running of events to officials. It is helpful if parents can offer the support and encouragement necessary to help their children feel good about themselves.
- Help their children to develop good healthy eating habits, especially meals prior to training and competition and ensure each child has sufficient rest.
- Re-enforce high standards of behaviour expected at competition and help their children to maintain a positive attitude.
- Parents are very important and greatly valued in sport and it is hoped that as many parents as possible will volunteer to help at the Club. Without the support of parent volunteers, the Clubs and the Governing Body would not function effectively.

Monitoring

MCF will review its Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy on an annual basis and in the following circumstances:

Changes in legislation and/or government guidance

- As required by the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit and UK Sport
- Following the introduction of any new internal or external safeguarding process, including the Vetting and Barring Scheme.
- As a result of any significant child protection case within sports.

Information Sharing Policy and Procedures**Introduction**

Information relating to safeguarding concerns is often highly sensitive and needs to be kept confidential. However, where the welfare, rights and liberties of children or the child* disclosing the information may be seriously at risk it may be necessary to breach confidentiality.

Confidential information should be shared if the public interest in safeguarding the welfare of a child or children overrides the need for confidentiality. In addition, there may be situations where disclosure is required under a court order or other legal obligation, regardless of whether consent is obtained.

The Government Strategy "Every Child Matters; Change for Children" identifies the importance of information sharing in two respects:

1. Enabling early intervention to help children, young people and families who need additional services to achieve positive outcomes, thus reducing inequalities between disadvantaged children and others; and
2. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

This document outlines the principles that MCF will apply when considering whether information should be shared and sets out the relevant circumstances where confidential information may be shared without consent. The MCF policy has been informed by the HM Government document Standards for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport.

Core Principles

When making a decision whether or not to share information, the welfare of the child/children is the paramount consideration. The following points outline the MCF approach for sharing information relating to child protection concerns.

- MCF will share information where there is a reasonable belief that it is necessary to share in order to protect or safeguard a child/children
- MCF will explain openly and honestly, or at least notify, at the outset what information will or could be shared, and why, and seek agreement – except where doing so puts the child or others at risk of significant harm
- Consent to share information will usually be sought from the individual to whom the information relates unless:
 - This may put children or other parties at risk of harm
 - Refusal to consent is unreasonable or not in the public interest
 - Consent cannot be obtained
 - MCF is advised by a statutory agency not to do so, or there is a Court order which so directs
- If consent is refused or there are good reasons not to seek consent, consideration will be given as to whether there is a sufficient public interest for the information to be shared
- MCF will share no more information than is necessary for the specific purposes of sharing that relevant information
- MCF will indicate, when sharing information, which aspects of the disclosure is factual (to the best of our knowledge) and which is an expression of professional opinion
- MCF will ensure that the way that information is shared is appropriate to the level of urgency but in the event that information is shared by phone, it will be supported by a written report
- Information that is shared will be accurate, up to date, necessary for the purpose for which it is being shared, shared only with those with a need to see it and shared securely
- Records will always be kept of the decision to share, or not to share information and the reasons for this decision
- Where information is shared during the course of an investigation, the outcome will be shared with those to whom the original information was sent

Information Sharing Policy and Procedures

Type of Information that will be shared

- Information relating to safeguarding/welfare/child protection concerns which meet the threshold for referral to external safeguarding agencies (Police or Social Services) will be shared in all cases
- In respect of CRB information which raises safeguarding concerns, MCF will disclose on a need to know basis the personal details of any individual that the MCF determined unsuitable to work with children
- Information indicating safeguarding/child protection concerns but which is not acted on by statutory agencies (for example, where prosecution is not possible, or has been unsuccessful; where a referral is 'bounced back' by Social Services or the Police as not meeting their threshold, but the MCF believes that concerns remain; or where risks are identified from information arising as a result of recruitment or other internal processes
- Information relating to poor practice cases (for example, breach of codes of conduct/ethics) involving a perceived risk to children, but not meeting the threshold for referral to external safeguarding agencies, and:
 - Where MCF has either suspended or excluded the individual, or
 - Has put in place special arrangements or monitoring to ensure children's welfare as a result of its disciplinary process

Abuse concerns meeting the threshold for police or Social Services action should be managed by those agencies. In circumstances where MCF believes that a concerning individual may be operating with children in another organisation(s), MCF will seek the advice of the statutory agencies when consideration is being given to sharing information with the other organisation(s).

*The Children Act (1989) defines a child as anyone under the age of 18.

Prevention

The MCF recognises that putting prevention measures in place is far better than the need to deal with abuse cases at a later date. The best way for prevention of abuse is to have in place a policy for recruitment to roles with the MCF and its clubs.

Welfare Officers

Responsibilities

Although the responsibility for safeguarding falls on everyone, a critical element in safeguarding is the designation of an individual who is responsible for safeguarding and promoting welfare of young people within the club. All BG clubs and gymnastics events are required to have a welfare officer to be responsible for:

- Responding to child protection and poor practice concerns
- Providing support and advice in the implementation of procedures that safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- Assisting the club to be more child-focused in its activities e.g. involving children in decision making processes.

The ideal candidate may be a parent or other volunteer with professional experience in child protection and/or safeguarding e.g. police officer, social worker, teacher, nursery nurse etc.

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Before finalising the appointment of a welfare officer, the club should ensure that the safe recruitment procedures have been fully applied.

The organisation must ensure that the welfare officer is fully empowered to fulfil the role and has the full support from the relevant committee/management to make any appropriate changes to procedures and practices.

Terms of Reference

- Be the first point of contact for club staff and volunteers, young people and parents for any issue concerning safeguarding, poor practice or potential/alleged abuse
- Ensure that all incidents are correctly reported and referred out in accordance with MCF guidelines
- Ensure that all relevant club members have the opportunity to access appropriate safeguarding training
- Maintain local contact details for Children's Social Care Services, the Police and Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB)
- Advise club management on safeguarding issues
- Ensure confidentiality is maintained and information is only shared on a 'need to know' basis

Core Skills

- Basic administration and record maintenance
- Child-centred approach
- Communication skills
- Confidence in relation to referring cases externally
- Ability to ensure policy and procedures are effectively implemented

Role of the welfare officer at events

- Ensuring that parents and children are aware of the role and responsibilities
- Reporting any incidents in line with MCF reporting procedures (Welfare Officers should have access to all emergency contact numbers including MCF)
- Taking a child-focused approach and responding to the needs of children during the event
- Working in partnership with other staff to resolve any welfare related issues that need to be addressed at the event
- Assisting the event organiser with the implementation of procedures for photography and the use of video cameras at the event and managing any issues that arise out of these policies

In addition to ensuring all MCF members are fully aware of the importance of safeguarding, it is essential that anyone who comes into contact with young people as part of their role in the sport understands what action should be taken in response to concerns, disclosures and allegations against others involved in the sport.

It is not the role of MCF or anyone in the sport to conduct enquiries into possible child abuse concerns. The following procedures outline the responses that should be taken in the event of an allegation or suspicions of abuse or significant harm.

It is important to note that some children or young people are unable to recognise or share concerns and often rely on adults with whom they are in contact to be alert to the possibility that they may be experiencing harm in some area of their lives. All concerns of the club welfare officer should be reported to the MCF on the appropriate forms.

If a child indicates that he/she is being abused, or information is received which gives rise to concern that the child may be being abused, the person receiving the information should:

MCF SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

- Stay calm and ensure that the child is safe and feels safe.
- Listen carefully to what is said, allowing the child to continue at his/her own pace.
- Explain that it is likely the information will have to be shared with others - do not promise to keep secrets.
- Keep questions to a minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said.
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in revealing the information.
- Show and tell the child that what he/she says is being taken seriously and recognises any difficulties inherent in interpreting what the child says.
- Tell the child what will be done next, and with whom the information will be shared.
- Record in writing what was said using the child's own words as soon as possible. The following information should be recorded:
 - Dates and times
 - Any names mentioned
 - To whom the information was given
 - Information that fact, hearsay or opinion should be notes as such
 - Ensure the record is signed and dated.

If the child indicates that he/she does not wish others to be informed about the allegations, carefully and tactfully explain the reasons why it may be in the interests of everybody if the matter is referred to the appropriate person or department.

Sharing concerns with parents

Sharing concerns with parents can be a difficult decision and must be one made by the welfare officer. If there are concerns that consultation with a parent may exacerbate a situation then it should be reported directly to the MCF.

Records and Information

Any information passed to the MCF, Children's Social Care Services/Social Services or the Police must be as accurate and helpful as possible and, ideally, should be accompanied by a detailed record providing:

- Personal details of the child concerned including age or date of birth, full name, gender, race, ethnic origin and address. This information will be accessible by the MCF for annual licence holders.
- Details of Parent/Person with Parental Responsibility and an indication of what, if any, information has been shared.
- The nature of the allegation.
- Full details of the person about whom the concern/allegation is made including, wherever possible, full name, date of birth, address, relationship the child concerned and/or position held in the club, if any.
- Description of any visible injuries or bruising.
- Detailed description of the child's account of how the injuries or bruising occurred.
- Any times and dates or other relevant information.
- A clear distinction between what is fact, hearsay or opinion.

Action to be taken if abuse or poor practice is observed during an event

It is not unknown for an act of abuse and more frequently, poor practice to occur within a competition environment. The following information provides instruction on what action should be taken at the point that the act of abuse or poor practice is observed.

MCF SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

It may be helpful to note that, based on the experience of case referrals, the most likely types of abuse to be encountered at an event are physical and emotional abuse. An act of possible abuse or poor practice needs to be reported without delay in line with the MCF reporting procedures described above.

The individual regarding the concern should be approached immediately by the senior official and another official, ideally the Welfare Officer, (if they are on site) and informed of the concern. If the abuse or poor practice is ongoing, he/she must be instructed to stop immediately and an emergency call made to the police to provide assistance if required. It should be noted, however, that if the matter of concern is poor practice, possibly due to lack of awareness rather than abuse and young people are not at significant risk, a more subtle approach would be appropriate and the Welfare Officer may not need to be involved at this stage. Consideration should be given to informing the individual in a manner that will not undermine his/her position with the young people.

If the concern relates to abuse, the priority is to ensure that the child/children are made safe. The Welfare Officer or another responsible adult must remain with the children until their needs have been fully addressed.

If the child concerned requires immediate medical treatment this should be sought without delay. It is important that the medical staff involved are made aware that the issue is potentially one of a child protection nature.

Safe Recruitment

Safe recruitment requires safeguarding issues to be considered at every stage of the recruitment process. Although the vast majority of coaches and officials are committed, dedicated people who are motivated to work within the sport for commendable reasons, it is vital that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that any unsuitable people or people who may abuse children are prevented from working with young people.

Licensed Officials

Licensed officials will be required to fill out a self-declaration as part of their application for their relevant licence.

Official Coaches

Officially licensed coaches will require an enhanced CRB disclosure as part of their coaching application.

Permanent Staff

All permanent or employed staff that regularly come in to contact with children will require an enhanced CRB disclosure.

Whistle Blowing

Safeguarding children and young people requires everyone to be committed to the highest possible standards of openness, integrity and accountability. MCF supports an environment where people feel free to raise their concerns with the knowledge that all concerns will be taken seriously.

The term 'whistle blowing' is often used in such circumstances to describe the raising of a concern about practices, procedures or conduct of an individual. In the MCF context a whistleblower may be:

- An official or coach
- A Competitor
- A parent
- A member of the public
-

Concerns should be raised without delay to either the Club Welfare Officer or the BG Lead Officer or BG Safeguarding and Compliance Officer. The earlier concerns are reported, the easier it will be to take action.

Anyone reporting a concern should provide as much information and detail as possible. This could include:

- Names of the people involved
- Other witnesses
- Dates of events
- Any other relevant documentation

MCF understands that whistle blowers are often very reluctant to report concerns. Thus, MCF recognises that whistle blowers may wish to raise concerns in confidence. In these circumstances, the identity of the whistle blower will be kept confidential. Any subsequent reason why disclosure may be required will be discussed in detail with the whistle blower before any action is taken.

MCF will not tolerate harassment or victimisation and will take action to protect anyone who has raised a concern in good faith. Anyone who is found to have victimised or harassed a whistle blower will face disciplinary action. Anyone who raises concerns known to be untrue may also be subject to disciplinary action.



MCF Officials Licence Application & Safeguarding Declaration Form

MCF-27

Complete this form in BLOCK CAPITALS to apply for an MCF Day Licence

Section 1 - Your Details

Title..... First Name Surname

Previous names by which you may have been known

Address

..... Post Code

Date of Birth Club

Mobile No Evening No

E Mail

Section 2 – Licence Information

Please tick the appropriate box

Motocross Clerk of the Course	<input type="checkbox"/>	Motocross Technical	<input type="checkbox"/>
XC Clerk of the Course	<input type="checkbox"/>	XC Technical	<input type="checkbox"/>
Minibike Clerk of the Course	<input type="checkbox"/>	Minibike Technical	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grass Track Clerk of the Course	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grass Track Technical	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trials Clerk of the Course	<input type="checkbox"/>	Trials Technical	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enduro Clerk of the Course	<input type="checkbox"/>	Enduro Clerk of the Course	<input type="checkbox"/>
Electronic Timekeeper	<input type="checkbox"/>	Engine Measurer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Motocross Marshal	<input type="checkbox"/>	Circuit Inspector	<input type="checkbox"/>

Date Seminar Attended Venue.....

Section 3 – Safeguarding Declaration

1, Have you been convicted of any criminal offences, received cautions, final warnings or reprimands? **YES / NO**

If YES please give details of any criminal convictions

.....

.....

2, Are you a person known to any Children’s Socoal Care/Social Services department as being an actual or potential risk to children under investigation for a Child Protection related incident? **YES / NO**

If YES please give details.....

.....

.....

MCF SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

3, Have you had a disciplinary sanction (from a sports or other organisation’s governing body) in relation to child abuse? **YES / NO**

If YES please give details.....

.....

.....

**MOTOR SPORTS CAN BE DANGEROUS AND MAY INVOLVE INJURY OR DEATH
Read carefully before signing to ensure you agree.**

1. I fully understand the type of the events where the License allows me to officiate and the rules and regulations that apply to such events and to competitors and will comply with them.
2. I confirm that I am physically fit to undertake my duties as an official at an event for which I am applying for a licence.
3. I agree to accept the risks of injury and death that are inherent in motor sports and agree to take part at my own risk.
4. I declare that I am 18 years of age or over.

I certify that all information in this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and realise that false information or omission may lead to termination of my services. I certify to inform the MCF in any changes in my circumstances with regards to the questions in this form.

I have read and understand the MCF Safeguarding Children Policy.

Signed Date.....

Section 4 – Instructors Information

I confirm that the person completing this application for an officials licence attended and completed the seminar stipulated in this form and that they are in possession of all of the relevant documentation for their role.

Instructors Name Signature.....

NOTE:

All MCF officials will be eligible to sit a seminar every three years. Any seminar taken in the last three months of any calendar year will be valid for three years starting the 1st of January of the following year.



