

Olney Runners

Club Welfare Policy



Introduction

All members of our club have a duty of care to one another. This is reflected in our Club Constitution and Codes of Conduct. Our aim is to create a welcoming and supportive setting for our members to enjoy being part of the club and most of all feel safe. We want members to know that there is a safe space to talk to us, if they have any concerns about their own welfare within the club. We also want to ensure that members feel confident in knowing how to raise any concerns they may have about the welfare of a member and how this will be dealt with.

As an England Athletics affiliated club we adopt the following policies for club welfare:

- [UKA Safeguarding Children Policy](#)
- [UKA Safeguarding Adults Policy and Guidance Procedures](#)
- [UKA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy 2018](#)

These can be found on the UKA Website or through the England Athletics Resource Library.

This process provides details on how we as a club, implement these policies within the club environment.

Safeguarding Children

Our aim at Olney Running Club is to create an environment in which a person under 18 years of age and their parent(s), guardian(s), responsible adult, carer, closest relative; can feel confident that our Club is providing a safe and wholesome environment for all participants.

As a club we can support and offer advice to every club member in order to protect them from neglect, exploitation and abuse. All suspicions and allegations of abuse against young athletes will be responded to, and followed up appropriately in accordance with this policy and local area Child Protection Policy guidelines and procedures.

Definitions:

All people under the age of 18 years are defined as children for the purposes of this policy.

All children regardless of their gender, racial origin, culture, religion, ability and sexual orientation have the right to protection from abuse.

All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and will be responded to by any officer of the club, who through Olney Running Club's welfare officer will refer the matter to the Social Services Department in whose area the incident or suspicion occurred.

Welfare Concerns

There are three types of welfare concerns that can be raised at the club

- A welfare concern that requires immediate action
- A welfare concern regarding a situation outside of the athletics environment
- A welfare concern regarding a situation within the athletics environment

There are different ways in which you may become aware of a concern

- A member may confide in you about a concern they have about themselves
- You may witness something that causes you concern
- A member or parent may confide in you about a concern they have about another member

When you become aware of a concern it is important that you do not:

- Probe for more information than is offered.
- Speculate or make assumptions.
- Show shock or distaste.
- Make comments about the person against whom the allegations have been made.
- Make promises or agree to keep secrets.
- Give a guarantee of confidentiality.

Reporting a Concern

All members have a duty to raise the concern with a club welfare officer to ensure that matters are appropriately managed and recorded by the club. It is not the members responsibility to investigate concerns. If the concern does not require immediate action, it should be reported in writing to the Club Welfare Officer so that an accurate record is logged which may be required at a later time.

In the case of an adult welfare concern, it is important that you also consider the needs and wishes of the person at risk, taking into account the nature of the alert.

Our Club Welfare Officers are;

Sarah McAuliffe – welfare@olneyrunners.org.uk

When a concern is raised that requires immediate action

If there is an immediate risk to the safety of an individual, you need to contact the police immediately and report your concerns. Please consider your own safety as well as that of the individual at this time.

When it is appropriate to do so, you should inform a Club Welfare Officer of the action taken for official club records and will use this to consider what, if any further action is required by the club.

When a concern is raised regarding a setting outside the athletics environment

If you become aware of a welfare concern that is not directly related to the club environment, you still have a duty of care to share this information. If the concern does not require immediate action, you should report the matter to a Club Welfare Officer, in writing as previously described.

The Club Welfare Officer will refer to the flow charts located in the appropriate policy (UKA Safeguarding Children / UKA Safeguarding Adults) and take the appropriate action.

The Club Welfare Officer may be required to make contact with local services to report this concern.

Contact details of these services can be found here:

- *Milton Keynes Children's Services - Tel: 01908 253169 or 01908 253170, email: children@milton-keynes.gov.uk*
- *Milton Keynes Children's Social Services (Out of Hours) – 01908 265545*
- *Milton Keynes Adult Social Services – 01908 253772*

Managing a Concern within the Athletics Environment

Report your concern to a Club Welfare Officer in writing. The Club Welfare Officer will then refer to the flowcharts located in the appropriate policy (UKA Safeguarding Children / UKA Safeguarding Adults) to decide if the concern meets the threshold of being reported to UKA

If the threshold is met for reporting the matter to UKA, the Club Welfare Officer is required to follow this process:

- Email dbrown@uka.org.uk or call the UKA Welfare Department on 0121 713 8450 (selecting option 2).
- UKA Welfare staff will talk you through the process that will subsequently follow and are on hand to answer any questions/concerns you may have.
- UKA Welfare staff will also offer you advice in relation to reporting back to club officials and managing your club environment appropriately.

If as a Club Welfare Officer, you are unsure if the concern meets the threshold you should contact UKA using the means above to check.

Managing a Concern that does not meet the threshold for reporting to UKA but still requires intervention at club level.

If the concern does not meet the threshold for being reported to UKA, it does not mean that the concern will be dismissed. It is possible that this concern is still causing distress to a member or members and requires intervention at a club level.

In this instance the Club Welfare Officer may need to speak to another member of the committee. In the first instance this should be another Club Welfare Officer or if this is not appropriate the Chair or other senior committee member. An agreement will then be formed on what action should be taken. It may be the case that some mediation is required. If as part of the concern, a formal complaint has been raised, the club will use its Disciplinary Process set out in the [Club Constitution](#) to manage the complaint.

If there is uncertainty regarding what action to take the Club Welfare Officer may sense check the proposed action with the England Athletics Club and Compliance Manager or their local Club Support Manager.

Support available for Club Welfare Officers

Occupying the role of Club Welfare Officer can be challenging at times, mainly due to the vast and unpredictable nature of issues/concerns that can and may arise within your club setting. Please always ensure that you place the importance of your own health and wellbeing at the forefront of your work. If you find that a particular matter or simply a build up of issues are causing you a degree of upset/stress, please ensure that you reach out to one of the following organisations that will be more than happy to talk the matter through with you and offer you the reassurance, guidance and support you rightly deserve.

- England Athletics Athlete & Club Compliance & Wellbeing Manager – 0121 713 8450 (option 3)
- UKA Welfare Department – 0121 713 8450

- Mind – 0300 123 3393
- NSPCC – 0808 800 5000
- Ann Craft Trust – 0115 951 5400

This policy and the related welfare documents will be provided to Run Leaders by the Club Welfare Officer on their appointment.

This process should be reviewed and updated every 3 years by Club Committee.

Date policy reviewed and agreed by the committee	Next review date
3 rd March 2021	March 2024

ANNEX 1

Good Practice Guidelines

All personnel should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from false allegations. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

Best Practice

Best practice means:

- Being open and conducting all interactions with children in a public place and with appropriate consent.
- Avoiding situations where you are alone with one child.
- If you have to meet or coach one child ensure it is conducted in an open environment, and where full consent and emergency contact details have been provided.
- If you are travelling alone with a child gain appropriate consent, avoid consistently having one child alone with you in the car and never sharing a room on your own with a child.
- Challenging bullying, harassment, foul or provocative language or controlling behaviour that could upset individuals or reduce them to tears. •
- Never ignoring bullying by parents, coaches or children. Listening to and supporting the person being bullied.
- Maintaining an appropriate relationship with children;
- Treating children fairly, with respect and avoiding favouritism.
- Being friendly and open and ensuring that relationships are appropriate for someone in a position of power and trust.
- Avoiding unnecessary physical contact. In certain circumstances physical contact is perfectly acceptable and appropriate, as long as it is not intrusive or disturbing to the child/athlete and that consent for contact has been given by the individual and appropriate parental consent.
- Being qualified and insured for the activities you are coaching and ensuring that your licence remains valid. Ensure that your practice is appropriate for the age and development stage of each athlete.
- Aim to make the experience of adult athletes safe and fun.
- Promote fairness and playing by the rules.
- Not tolerate the use of prohibited or illegal substances.
- Treat all adults equally and preserve their dignity; this includes giving more and less talented members of a group similar attention, time and respect

Poor Practice

The following are examples of poor practice and should be avoided:

- Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games including horseplay.
- A coach shouting comments at athletes when they are not working hard enough.
- A coach using harassing and discriminatory language such as 'you run like a girl.'
- Make sexually suggestive comments to an individual, even in fun.
- Allow allegations made by an individual to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.

- A coach engaging in an intimate relationship with one of his/her athletes.
- A group of athletes ganging up on a new athlete and refusing to talk to him/her.
- A coach taking a group of children or vulnerable adults away to a weekend event on his/her own.

The list above is not exhaustive and many other examples exist.