

# Longhoughton Community and Sports Centre Trust

## Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy

### 1. Statement of policy

As a community organisation, Longhoughton Community and Sports Centre Trust (LCSCT) wants every child or vulnerable adult who uses Longhoughton Community & Sports Centre (LCSC), regardless of age, to develop their potential and to enjoy and benefit from the services and facilities we have to offer. We believe that at all times and in all situations they have a right to feel safe and protected from any situation or practice that might lead to them being physically or psychologically damaged.

This policy is our commitment to provide systems for recognising and reporting any such risk, and outlines our duty of care to safeguard all children and vulnerable adults involved in activities at LCSC in accordance with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

All LCSCT Trustees are expected to apply for, and obtain, a Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) enhanced certificate. Community Action Northumberland supports the Trust/Trustees to obtain DBS certificates.

We expect that all groups that work with children and use our facilities will have their own comprehensive Safeguarding Children Policies (eg Longhoughton Rangers Football Club, Longhoughton Scouts, etc). LCSCT will work with any user-group that uses our facilities to ensure that all children and vulnerable adults who use LCSC are protected.

### 2. Definitions

- A **child** is defined as anyone who has not reached their 18th birthday. 'Children' therefore means 'children and young people'.
- A **vulnerable adult** is someone 18 or over who is unable to care independently for themselves or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation. This could be due to a physical or learning disability, illness or injury or mental health issues; old age; substance addiction; domestic violence or abuse or other reasons. It can be a temporary or a permanent condition.
- **Child protection** is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare, and refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are at risk of suffering, significant harm.
- **Longhoughton Community & Sports Centre (LCSC)** includes all areas of the site for which LCSCT has management responsibility.

### 3. Policy Aims

- Promote good practice.

- Allow all volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.
- To provide confidence to all users of LCSC that these policies are in place for their protection.

#### **4. Volunteer Involvement & Policy Application**

- Volunteers working directly with LCSC do not have regular or extensive involvement with children or vulnerable persons; the majority of contact is indirect through the use of the premises by external groups or clubs.
- This Policy applies to all Trustees, volunteers, members, hirers and their associates, and members of the public using the Community Centre.
- It is the responsibility of all Trustees, volunteers, members and Designated Persons to follow the LCSC Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy guidelines and to work together to provide maximum protection to all who use our facilities.
- Whilst all Trustees and volunteers are aware of, and have agreed to comply with, this policy, there will be many events and activities at the LCSC where parents, guardians and carers are present. Parents, guardians and carers are required to accept full responsibility for the activities and behaviour of children and/or vulnerable persons in their care.

#### **5. Managing Incidents**

If any of the following occur you should report this immediately to another colleague and record the incident and report it to the Designated Person without delay. You should also ensure the parent/guardian/carer of the child are informed:

- If you accidentally hurt a child or vulnerable person
- If a child or vulnerable person seems distressed in any manner
- If a child or vulnerable person appears to be sexually aroused by your actions
- If a child or vulnerable person misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.

#### **6. Good Practice Guidelines**

- Always work in an open environment avoiding private or unobserved situations and encourage open communication.
- Treat all children and vulnerable adults equally and with respect and dignity.
- Always put the welfare of each child or vulnerable adult first. Seek to make activities fun and enjoyable, and promote fair play.
- Maintain a safe and appropriate distance.
- Build balanced relationships based on mutual trust and seek to empower all LCSC users to share in decision making.
- Ensure that any form of manual/physical support is provided openly and wherever possible in the presence of other responsible persons.

- Involve parents/guardians/carers wherever possible.
- Be positive, give enthusiastic and constructive feedback, avoid negative criticism.
- Secure parental consent in writing, in case the need arises to administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment.

## **6. Good Practice Guidelines (continued)**

- Keep a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given. Record the incident in the accident book located in the building's main kitchen.
- Request written parental/guardian/carers' consent if officials are required to transport children or vulnerable persons in their vehicle(s).
- In the case of an emergency (eg a child or vulnerable person sustains an injury requiring hospital treatment or a parent/guardian/carer fails to arrive to pick a child or vulnerable person up at the end of a session), ensure that the person in charge of the user-group or a parent/guardian/carer is aware and consents to any proposed action.

## **7. Practices to be avoided**

- Do not spend excessive amounts of time with children or vulnerable persons, away from others.
- Do not take a child or vulnerable person to an event or activity without written consent from a parent/guardian/carer.

## **8. Practices NEVER to be sanctioned**

### **Do not:**

- Engage in rough physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Share a room with a child or vulnerable person except in the case of a medical emergency.
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching.
- Allow allegations made by a child or vulnerable person to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- Do things of a personal nature for children or vulnerable adults that they can do for themselves.
- Invite or allow children to stay with you at your home unsupervised.
- Use photographic/filming equipment without the consent of parents/guardians/carers.

Evidence suggests that some people have used some activities as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young and disabled people in vulnerable positions. All clubs should be vigilant and any concerns should be reported to the group leader.

Video can be used as a training aid: there is no intention to prevent appropriate groups using video equipment as a legitimate training/teaching aid. However, children and vulnerable persons, and their parents/guardians/carers should be made aware that

this is part of the programme and give written consent. Such films should be stored safely.

## **9. Confidentiality**

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and discussed on a need to know basis only (with need being defined as need to 'have access in the course of their duties'). This includes the following people:

- The Safeguarding Designated Person of LCSCT
- The parents/guardian/carer of the person who is the subject of any complaint.
- The person making the allegation.
- Children's Services and/or Police
- LCSCT Chairperson.

No confidentiality agreement should be offered to children in a disclosure situation.

## **10. Responding to Allegations or Suspicions**

- It is not the responsibility of anyone working in LCSC, in a paid or unpaid capacity, to decide whether or not an incident (eg child abuse) has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities. Contact must be made with the LCSCT Designated Person who will support and guide you in following the reporting procedures, according to the Northumberland Safeguarding Children Board.
- LCSC assures all staff/volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone who in good faith reports his/her concern that a Designated Person is, or may be, abusing a child.
- LCSCT does not currently employ any staff, however in the future where there is a complaint against a member of staff there may be three types of investigation:
  - Criminal investigation
  - Child Protection/vulnerable adults investigation
  - Disciplinary or misconduct investigation.

The results of the police and child protection investigation may well influence the disciplinary investigation, but not necessarily.

## **11. Medical Emergency**

- Designated Persons and/or group leaders must call an ambulance if a child or vulnerable person requires emergency medical treatment. Tell the ambulance and hospital staff immediately if there is any suspicion that the injury is not accidental.

- Trustees/Staff/volunteers should not transport children in their own cars (however, see Good Practice Guidelines above).
- Parents/guardians/carers must be contacted immediately if possible. A written consent form for emergency medical treatment should have been completed when the child or vulnerable person started using the provision if this is appropriate.

## **12. Concerns about Suspected Abuse**

- Any suspicion that a child or vulnerable person has been abused by a Trustee, volunteer, member of staff or group leader should be reported to the LCSCT Designated Person, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the person in question and any other child or vulnerable person who may be at risk.
- The LCSCT Designated Person will refer the allegation to the appropriate authorities (eg Children's Services Department) which may involve the Police, or go directly to the police if out-of-hours.
- The parents/guardians/carers of the affected person will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the appropriate authorities (eg Police).
- The LCSCT Designated Person will also notify the LCSCT Chairperson who will deal with any media enquiries.
- If the LCSCT Designated Person is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to an alternative LCSCT officer or Trustee, who will refer the allegation to the appropriate authorities.

## **13. Disclosure of Abuse**

- In cases where a child makes a disclosure of sexual abuse or where there is strong suspicion of sexual abuse, the procedure is slightly different
- TRUSTEES, VOLUNTEERS & MEMBERS OF STAFF MUST NOT TRY TO INVESTIGATE THE MATTER THEMSELVES, or question a child for further information. This is a specialist task and is the responsibility of the Children's Services Department who work in conjunction with the Police Vulnerable Person's Team.
- Inappropriate questioning ((eg asking leading questions), can lead to vital evidence being inadmissible in court.
- It is also essential that where a child's clothing may be used as evidence, it is not tampered with.
- Any item which may provide evidence, such as a child's drawing, must not be discarded.
- The LCSCT Designated Person must immediately report the concerns/incident to the Duty Social Worker at the Children's Services Department who will decide what action to take. In cases where the parents//guardians/carers are the alleged abusers, the Designated Person/group leader MUST NOT inform parents/carers before reporting it the Duty Social Worker.
- The LCSCT Designated person must record the incident and any statements given at the time of reporting. Such records should be held securely by the Designated Person and shared only on a need to know basis.
- Training is provided for Designated Persons and Trustees through Community Action

Northumberland. The Designated Person should attend refresher training every two years.

#### **14. Key Contact/Telephone Numbers:**

- LCSCT Designated Person is: Stewart Barrett Tel: 07508 144427
- Children's Social Services and Vulnerable Adults (Adult Protection) Tel: 01670 536400
- Emergency Duty Team (out of hours) Tel: 01670 536000
- Local Authority LADO/Complex Case manager Tel: 01670 623979

Reviewed & Approved by Trustees 10.06.25

To be reviewed In June 2026.



Jeremy Pickard, Chair