



Good Practice in Baseball and Softball

**Participant welfare, good practice and child
protection policy and procedures**

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POLICIES OF BASEBALLSOFTBALLUK

1 Policies of BaseballSoftballUK

1.1 Introduction

Everyone who participates in Baseball or Softball is entitled to do so in an enjoyable and safe environment. To ensure this, BaseballSoftballUK has developed principles that all its personnel and member clubs should follow.

These principles apply to all participants, but young people in particular are entitled to a higher duty of care and to be protected from poor practice or abuse. Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school and the sporting environment. Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with children in order to harm them. BSUK is committed to devising and implementing policies so that everyone in the sport accepts their responsibilities to safeguard children from harm and abuse. This means following procedures to protect children and to report any concerns about their welfare to appropriate authorities.

Everyone working in Baseball and Softball either in a paid or a voluntary capacity, together with those working in affiliated organisations, has a role to play in safeguarding the welfare of children and preventing their abuse. Anyone may have regular contact with children and be a very important link in identifying cases where a child needs protection. BSUK advises that coaches of Juniors be BSUK qualified and that in any case they fully accept the Sportscoach UK Code of Conduct which is included in all BSUK Coaching Course Handbooks.

Please refer to the BSUK Welfare document, or Club Welfare Officer Basic Awareness document for the main policy and procedures for more detailed safeguarding information.

All policies and procedures discussed below refer to vulnerable adults as well as to children.

1 POLICIES OF BASEBALLSOFTBALLUK

1.2 Policy statement

The BSUK is committed to the following:

- ◆ the welfare of young people is paramount
- ◆ all young people, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity should be able to participate in Baseball or Softball in a fun and safe environment
- ◆ taking all reasonable steps to protect young people from harm, discrimination and degrading treatment and to respect their rights, wishes and feelings
- ◆ all suspicions and allegations of poor practice or abuse will be taken seriously, and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- ◆ all BSUK employees who work with young people will be recruited with regard to their suitability for that responsibility, and will be provided with guidance and/or training in good practice and child protection procedures
- ◆ that all its member clubs and affiliated organisations will similarly accept responsibility for the welfare of the young people in their care in accordance with the BSUK's policies and procedures, and will incorporate this within their constitutions

Terms and abbreviations

The following terms and abbreviations are used in this document.

- ◆ Anyone under the age of 18 is considered to be a **child/young person**
- ◆ **'Parent'** is used as a generic term to include parents, carers and guardians
- ◆ **'Personnel'** includes employees of BSUK as well as volunteers and all participants in the sports of Baseball and Softball
- ◆ **'Welfare Officer'** is the individual within an affiliated club whose responsibilities are explained in section 3.4.
- ◆ **BSUK**
BaseballSoftballUK
- ◆ **CPO**
Child Protection Officer (of BSUK)
- ◆ **CRB**
Criminal Records Bureau

2 GOOD PRACTICE, POOR PRACTICE AND ABUSE

2.1 Introduction

To provide young people with the best possible experience and opportunities in Baseball and Softball, everyone must operate within an accepted ethical framework (such as the Sportscoach UK Code of Conduct) and demonstrate exemplary behaviour. Not only will this allow Baseball and Softball to make a positive contribution to the development of young people and safeguard their welfare, but it also protects all personnel from the risk of false allegations of abuse or poor practice.

It is not always easy to distinguish poor practice from abuse, whether intentional or accidental. It is not therefore the responsibility of employees or participants in Baseball and Softball to make judgements about whether or not abuse is taking place. It is, however, their responsibility to identify poor practice and possible abuse and to act if they have concerns about the welfare of a child, as explained in section 4. This section will help you identify what is meant by good practice, poor practice and abuse.

2.2 Good practice.

All personnel should adhere to the following principles and actions.

- ◆ Before undertaking any activities involving young people, conduct a risk assessment to identify possible sources of danger and take appropriate action to minimise these risks
- ◆ Make the experience of Baseball and Softball fun and enjoyable; promote fairness, and deal with bullying and do not condone rule violations or the use of prohibited or substances; insist on adherence to the BSUK Safety Code and its Child Protection procedures confront illegal
- ◆ Treat all young people equally; this means giving both the more and less talented members of a group similar attention, time, respect and preserving their dignity
- ◆ Respect the developmental stage of each young person and do not risk sacrificing their welfare in a desire for club or personal achievements. This means ensuring that the training intensity is appropriate to the physical, social and emotional stage of the development of the player - guidance on how much and how often juniors should train is available from BSUK. Training and competition schedules must be suited primarily to the needs and the interests of the child, not those of the parents, coaches or club.
- ◆ Build relationships based on mutual trust and respect, in which young people are encouraged to take responsibility for their own development and decision-making. Avoid situations where the coach or team manager use their position and power to decide what the rower should or should not do without consideration of the young person's needs and capabilities

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- ◆ Always be publicly open when working with children. Avoid coaching sessions or meetings where a coach and an individual athlete are completely unobserved
- ◆ Where children need to be supervised in the changing rooms, coaches should work in pairs, and involve parents if possible. Maintain an appropriate and open environment, with no secrets
- ◆ Avoid unnecessary physical contact with young people. Where any form of physical guidance is required in teaching technique, this should be provided openly and with the consent of the athlete. It is important to educate parents of what is and is not acceptable technically in the context of Baseball and Softball. Physical contact (touching) can be appropriate so long as it is neither intrusive nor disturbing and the athlete's permission has been given
- ◆ Maintain a safe and appropriate relationship with athletes. It is inappropriate for coaches and others in positions of authority to have an intimate relationship with a young person, even if they are over 16, the normal age of legal consent.
- ◆ Maintain appropriate standards of behaviour at social events that young people attend
- ◆ Be an excellent role model, for example by not smoking or drinking alcohol while working with young people
- ◆ Communicate regularly with parents and involve them in decision-making. Gain their consent in writing to act in loco parentis to give permission for the administration of emergency first aid or other medical treatment if the need arises
- ◆ The club and coach should be aware of any medical conditions, existing injuries and medicines being taken. Keep a written record of any injury or accident that occurs, together with details of any treatment given. Arrange that someone with knowledge of first aid is readily available
- ◆ Gain written parental consent for any significant travel arrangements, especially if an overnight stay is involved.

2.3 Poor practice

The following are regarded as poor practice and should be avoided by all personnel.

- ◆ Unnecessarily spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others
- ◆ Taking children alone in a car on journeys, however short
- ◆ Taking children to your home where they will be alone with you
- ◆ Sharing a room with a child
- ◆ Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- ◆ Allowing or engaging in inappropriate touching of any form
- ◆ Allowing children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- ◆ Making sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- ◆ Reducing a child to tears as a form of control

- ◆ Letting allegations a child makes go unchallenged, unrecorded, or not acted upon
- ◆ Doing things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves
- ◆ Having children stay at your home with you unsupervised

Where cases arise where it is impractical to avoid any of the situations mentioned in this section, they should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge in the organisation and the children's parents.

If during your care of a child you accidentally hurt them, the child seems distressed in any manner, appears to be sexually aroused by your actions, or misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done, report any such incidents as soon as possible to another colleague and make a brief written note of it. Parents should also be informed of the incident.

2.4 Abuse

Abuse in all its forms can affect a child at any age. The effects can be so damaging that if not treated, they may follow an individual into adulthood. For example, an adult who has been abused as a child may find it difficult, or impossible, to maintain a stable, trusting relationship; may become involved with drugs or prostitution; may attempt suicide; or may abuse a child in the future.

Children with disabilities may be at increased risk of abuse through various factors such as stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, isolation, and a powerlessness to protect themselves, or adequately to communicate that abuse has occurred. Children from ethnic minorities, who may also be experiencing racial discrimination, may be, or feel, doubly powerless in these respects.

Abuse may take a number of forms, and may be classified under the following headings, as defined by Working Together to Safeguard Children (Her Majesty's Government April 2006; paras 1.30, 1.31, 1.32 and 1.33 pg 37-38):

Physical Abuse

1.30 Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Emotional Abuse

1.31 Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

1.32 Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing children or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

1.33 Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a

parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of adequate care-takers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Bullying

Within Working to Safeguard Children is a definition of bullying, included here for ease of comprehension:

Bullying may be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. It can take many forms, but the three main types are physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft), verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name calling) and emotional (e.g. isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of their peer group). The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to children, to the extent that it affects their health and development or, at the extreme, causes them significant harm (including self harm). All settings in which children are provided with services or are living away from home should have in place rigorously enforced anti-bullying strategies.

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2.5 Indicators of abuse

Even for those experienced in working with child abuse, it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. BSUK acknowledges that most people involved in Our sports are not experts in such recognition, but indications that a child is being abused may include one or more of the following:

- ◆ Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries
- ◆ An injury for which an explanation seems inconsistent
- ◆ The child describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her
- ◆ Someone else – a child or adult, expresses concern about the welfare of a child
- ◆ Unexplained changes in a child's behaviour – e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn, or displaying sudden outbursts of temper – or behaviour changing over time
- ◆ Inappropriate sexual awareness. Engaging in sexually explicit behaviour in games
- ◆ Distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected
- ◆ Difficulty in making friends
- ◆ Being prevented from socialising with other children
- ◆ Displaying variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite
- ◆ Losing weight for no apparent reason
- ◆ Becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt

It must be recognised that the above list is not exhaustive, but also that the presence of one or more of the indicators is not proof that abuse is actually taking place. It is not the responsibility of those working in Baseball and Softball to decide that child abuse is occurring, but it is their responsibility to act on any concerns.

Signs of bullying may include

- ◆ Behavioural changes such as reduced concentration or becoming withdrawn, clingy, depressed, tearful, emotionally up and down, reluctant to go to training or to competitions
- ◆ an unexplained drop-off in performance
- ◆ physical signs such as stomach-aches, headaches, difficulty in sleeping, bed-wetting, scratching and bruising, damaged clothes and bingeing on food, cigarettes or alcohol
- ◆ a shortage of money or frequent loss of possessions

3 RECRUITING AND SELECTING PERSONNEL TO WORK WITH CHILDREN

3.1 Introduction

Anyone may have the potential to abuse children in some way and it is important that all reasonable steps are taken to prevent unsuitable people from working with children. This applies equally to volunteers as well as paid staff, and to both part time and full time workers. The procedures set out below are expressed in terms that apply to paid staff, but equivalent procedures should be used in respect of volunteers. The particular circumstances of individual cases need to be taken into account, but the fundamental principle is that those in charge of activities involving young people must take all reasonable steps to satisfy themselves as to the suitability of those who are given access to the children in their care.

3.2 Controlling access to children

Applicants for positions that involve significant access to young people (for example junior coaches or junior co-ordinators) should first complete procedures designed to elicit information about their past career (including any gaps), and to disclose any criminal record or other matter that has a bearing on their suitability to work with children e.g. previous investigations with police or social services or disciplinary investigations in relation to work with children. It should be made clear that failure to disclose relevant information will result in disciplinary action and possible dismissal or exclusion.

Consent should be obtained from applicants for checks to be conducted to determine whether any relevant information on them is held by the Criminal Records Bureau.

At least two references should be taken up in relation to professional staff, including at least one regarding previous work with children – see **Appendix 1**. Similar procedures should be applied for volunteers; for example where a coach transfers from one club to another, it would be appropriate to contact the previous club to see whether there is any reason that it should be they should not be given access to young people. All information received in relation to applicants must be kept secure and treated with strict confidentiality.

3.3 Vetting

All personnel who will have significant access to young people must first be vetted to establish whether they have any criminal convictions or other past behaviour that suggests they are unsuitable to work with children. This applies equally to paid staff and volunteers. This is done by obtaining a Disclosure about the individual from the Criminal Records Bureau. The required procedure is explained in **Appendix 2**.

In the past, before the Criminal Records Bureau was established, applicants completed a self-declaration form containing similar information, and giving their consent to have checks made about them with the police and social services. This procedure is no longer available for new applications, but those people who have previously submitted such a form in relation to their existing activities in a particular club need not obtain a Disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau for the time being. However, anyone applying for a new position, including those who move to a different club, must now obtain the CRB Disclosure.

It is important to emphasise that the absence of any relevant disclosure emerging from this vetting process does not guarantee that the individual is safe to work with children, so it should not be relied on excessively. It is only one of a number of factors in the initial assessment of the person's suitability for such responsibilities.

3.4 The Welfare Officer within the club

The role of the Club Welfare Officer is to:

- ensure that all club helpers/officials/coaches complete a volunteer reference form (see volunteer reference form in Appendix 1)
- send a copy of any such forms to BSUK on request
- receive and advise on reports or disclosures from club members
- initiate action, ensuring that all appropriate persons have been contacted
- inform the BSUK WO of any cases of misconduct that involve child abuse

- maintain up to date knowledge of welfare and child protection issues with support from BSUK refer all media enquiries about suspected or reported abuse or poor practice to BSUK

Every club with any junior members should appoint a Welfare Officer to advise the club committee on compliance with all the procedures described in this booklet and to act as a focal point for reporting any concerns. This person will have the primary responsibility to check that everyone who has significant access to young people within the club is suitable for that role and has been vetted as described above. The person appointed should be identifiable to the junior members of the club and their parents, but should have a degree of independence from their activities – for example he or she should not be the junior co-ordinator or actively coaching juniors. The Welfare Officer should undergo the vetting procedure described at 3.3.

RECRUITING AND SELECTING PERSONNEL TO WORK WITH CHILDREN

3.5 Training

The effectiveness of the policies described in this booklet will depend on everyone who is involved with junior Baseball or Softball being aware of what is good practice and current BSUK procedures. This applies particularly to those working directly with young people, such as junior co-ordinators, coaches, team managers and Welfare Officers, but an awareness of child protection issues is also needed by others who may be involved more indirectly, such as administrative staff, event organisers, committee members or occasional helpers.

All club welfare officers need to attend either the SportsCoachUK “Good Practice and Child Protection” course or to be in contact with their Local Safeguarding Children’s Boards to seek the child protection courses which are available through the LSCBs. There will be a charge for the SportsCoachUK course. Any course costs are to be borne by the club; accredited clubs, or those in the process of achieving accreditation, will have the cost of their course paid for by BSUK. The LSCB’s courses MAY involve a charge but are more likely to be free.

At present, one training course on Child Protection is available through BSUK and is recommended for those groups identified:

- ◆ CPSU’s “Time To Listen” course – delivered regionally by a qualified tutor.

The BSUK will promote all Child Protection Training via its CPO Club Newsletter and the BSUK Website www.BaseballSoftballUK.com

Formal training in child protection will help people to:

- ◆ compare their own practice against what is regarded as good practice in Baseball and Softball and check that their practice is likely to protect them from false allegations
- ◆ recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice or abuse
- ◆ deal with the vetting procedures described at 3.3.
- ◆ work safely and effectively with children.

4 RESPONDING TO SUSPICIONS AND ALLEGATIONS

4.1 Introduction

Most cases of child abuse in fact take place within the family setting. However, abuse can and does occur in other situations as well, including sport or other social activities, and is rarely a one-off event when it occurs within such a setting. It is crucial that those involved in Baseball and Softball are aware of this possibility and that all allegations are taken seriously and appropriate action taken.

It is not the responsibility of anyone working under the auspices of the BSUK or in a member club, whether in a paid or a voluntary capacity, to decide whether or not child abuse is taking place. However, there is a responsibility to inform appropriate agencies of possible abuse so that they can then make inquiries and take any necessary action to protect the child. This applies both to suspicions of abuse occurring within the context of Baseball or Softball activities and to allegations that abuse is taking place elsewhere. This section explains how you should respond to such concerns and below

4.2 Receiving evidence of possible abuse

We may become aware of possible abuse in various ways. We may see it happening ourselves; we may suspect that it is occurring because of signs such as those listed in 2.5 above; it may be reported to us by someone else, or directly by the child affected.

In the last of these cases, it is particularly important to respond appropriately. If a child says or indicates that he or she being abused, or information is obtained which gives you concern that a child is being abused, you should:

- ◆ React calmly so as not to frighten the child
- ◆ Tell the child they are not to blame and that it was right to tell
- ◆ Take what the child says seriously, recognising the difficulties inherent in interpreting what is said by a child who has a speech disability and/or differences in language
- ◆ Keep questions to the absolute minimum necessary so that there is a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said
- ◆ Reassure the child, but do not promise to keep the matter secret – explain that to resolve the problem it will be necessary to inform other people as appropriate.

4.3 Recording information

As with other forms of information arising in relation to child protection, information of this kind is highly sensitive and confidential. Accordingly, it should be held under secure conditions and only made available to those who have a definite need for it.

You should make a note as soon as possible of whatever information you obtain both for your own future reference and possibly for passing on to others, such as the BSUK's Child Protection Officer or appropriate agencies such as the social services department or the police. In writing such a note, you should confine yourself to the facts, and distinguish between what is your own personal knowledge and what you have been told by other people. You should not include your own opinions on the matter, to avoid the possibility of libel.

Information should include the following:

- ◆ The nature of the allegation, in as much detail as possible, including times, dates, locations and other relevant information
- ◆ Details of the child involved, including name, age, address and other contact details, and identifying who has parental responsibility for the child

RESPONDING TO SUSPICIONS AND ALLEGATIONS

- ◆ Details of the person against whom the allegation is made, including name, relationship with the child, age and contact details (if known)
- ◆ The identity and contact details of any informants or other witnesses. The child's account, if he or she can give one, of what has happened
- ◆ A description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Details of who else has been informed of the alleged incident
- ◆ Any other relevant information

An example of an incident report for recording such information is set out in **Appendix 3**.

4.4 Reporting the concern

BSUK expects its members and staff to discuss any concern they may have about the welfare of a child immediately with the person in charge, and subsequently to check that appropriate action has been taken. The particular route you might follow in various circumstances is suggested below.

Working within a club

If you are working within a Baseball or Softball club, you should inform the Welfare Officer or the person in charge of the club. They inform the Lead Child Protection Officer.

Working with or in schools

If you are working with schoolchildren as part of the school curriculum or extracurricular activities you should inform the Head Teacher of the school or his nominee.

Working with athletes away from home

If you are working with athletes away from home (for example on training camps or at events), then you should inform the Head Coach or Team Manager. They inform the Lead Child Protection Officer.

Circumstances in which other people might then need to be informed are discussed below:

Parents or carers

There is always a commitment to work in partnership with parents or carers where there are concerns about their children. Therefore, in most situations, it would be important to talk to parents or carers to help clarify any initial concerns. For example, if a child seems withdrawn, they may have experienced bereavement in the family. However, there are circumstances in which a child might be placed at even greater risk were such concerns to be shared, e.g. where a parent or carer may be responsible for the abuse or not able to respond to the situation appropriately. In these situations, or where concerns still exist, any suspicion, allegation or incidence of abuse must be reported to appropriate agencies as soon as possible.

The NSPCC or other agencies

The first consideration at this point is to minimise the danger of further abuse to the child or to other children. The person in charge should seek advice from the local police or social services department or the NSPCC. (You can obtain advice by telephoning the NSPCC freephone Helpline – the number is 0808 800 5000 and is a 24 hour service. You do not have to give your name but it is helpful if you can.) The allegation should be referred to the police and social services department in any case involving physical or sexual abuse or where the child's safety is otherwise at risk. If the person in charge is not available, or the concern is about the person in charge, the person in receipt of the information or with the concern should contact these agencies direct. Reporting the matter to the police or social services department should not be delayed by attempts to obtain more information.

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Social Services

The social services department has a statutory duty under the Children Act 1989 (as amended by the Children Act 2004) for the welfare of a child. When a child protection referral is made its staff has a legal responsibility to investigate. This may involve talking to the child and family and gathering information from other people who know the child. The telephone number is in the local phone book. Wherever possible, referrals telephoned to the social services department should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours. A record should also be made of the name and designation of the social services member of staff to whom the concerns were passed, together with the time and date of the call, in case any follow-up is needed.

Police

Where the apparent abuse is of a criminal nature, it will be appropriate to inform the police. A record should be made of the crime reference number provided by the police, together with the time and date of the call, in case any follow-up is needed. The police and social services department may also carry out a joint enquiry.

BSUK

The person in charge may be unsure about whether the allegation constitutes abuse or not, and unclear about what action to take. There may be circumstances where allegations are about poor practice (which need not be referred to the social services or police) rather than abuse, **but those responsible should consult with the Child Protection Officer (CPO) of BSUK** who will gain further advice where there is any doubt. Notifying the CPO is also important because this matter may be just one of a series of other instances which together cause concern.

Before reporting anything to any agency, or the NGB, familiarise yourself with paragraph **4.3** and use the incident form in **Appendix 3**.

4.5 Disciplinary procedures – “Whistle blowing”

The discovery that a member of staff or volunteer may be abusing a child will raise feelings and concerns among other staff or volunteers, and it can be inherently difficult to report such matters. However, it is important that any concerns for the welfare of the child arising from abuse or harassment by a member of staff or volunteer should be reported immediately. BSUK assures all staff and volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone who, in good faith, reports his or her concern that a colleague is or may be abusing a child.

As indicated above an allegation of abuse may give rise to a child protection investigation by the social services department and/or a criminal investigation involving the police. In addition, if the abuse is alleged to have been committed in the course of a person's employment, he or she will be subject to whatever disciplinary procedures and sanctions are provided for within the employment contract.

However, for both volunteers and paid staff, if the abuse is alleged to have occurred within the context of Baseball or Softball, it may also require disciplinary action by the club and/or BSUK/NGB. The Welfare Officer or other person in charge of the club should therefore inform the BSUK's Child Protection Officer of the circumstances. This may be done by letter to BSUK headquarters; alternatively, the BSUK's Child Protection Officer may be contacted by telephone through the BSUK's offices.

The BSUK CPO, in consultation with the officers of the Association, will make a decision as to whether any immediate action is required.

If the matter is being investigated by the police and/or social services, BSUK will seek advice from them before proceeding with its own investigation. Any statutory investigation might influence the outcome of a BSUK investigation.

In appropriate cases, the club and/or the Association will suspend the individual concerned while an investigation is taking place. This is not intended to prejudge the outcome of the investigation, but simply to remove the individual from contact with children until the investigation is concluded. Irrespective of the findings of the social services or police inquiries, BSUK will assess all individual cases under the appropriate misconduct/disciplinary procedure.

RESPONDING TO SUSPICIONS AND ALLEGATIONS

The disciplinary sanctions available include the following:

By the club – Suspension or exclusion from membership of the individual concerned, and such other sanctions are provided for within the club's constitution.

By the NGB - Suspension or withdrawal of the individual's status as a registered member of the NGB.

By BSUK – Suspension or withdrawal of the individual's status as an accredited a coach or an official, together with reprimands and fines as provided for within BSUK's welfare policy and procedures.

In addition BSUK may impose disciplinary sanctions against clubs who fail to apply these Child Protection Procedures, particularly if such failures are serious or persistent. Disciplinary, grievance and appeals procedures will be conducted in accordance with BSUK's welfare policy and procedures.

Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality for all concerned, and consideration will be given to what support may be appropriate to children, parents, members of staff and volunteers. Firstly this will involve clear communication with all parties through the Club Welfare Officer (see Appendix 6). In addition, support should be given to all parties involved in the case (see Appendices 7, 8 and 9).

If, following discussion between BSUK's CPO and relevant club officials, it is clear that the allegation is about poor practice rather than abuse, then it will dealt with as a misconduct issue, either by the club's disciplinary procedures or by BSUK.

Where any matter has been handled by the club but nevertheless concerns remain, then this should be referred to the CPO of BSUK. Senior officers of BSUK will need to decide how this will be dealt with and whether or not to initiate disciplinary proceedings.

All investigations follow general local authority timescale guidelines: That there should not be any period without communication of more than 28 days with involved parties and that case management processes should not extend over 3 months. Only in exceptional circumstances should timescales extend up to 6 months.

4.6 Allegations of previous abuse

Allegations of abuse are sometimes made some time after the event, for example, by an adult who was abused as a child by a member of staff who is still working with children. Where such an allegation is made, you should follow the procedures given above and have the matter reported to the police and/or social services department. This is because other children, either within the sport or outside it, may be at risk from this person. Anyone who has a previous criminal conviction for offences related to abuse is automatically excluded from working with children.

IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING PROCEDURES

BSUK has established a Welfare Group to oversee the implementation of these procedures and to monitor their application in practice. It is this Group's responsibility to check that the procedures continue to reflect the current recommendations of, for example, external agencies that specialise in child protection and are disseminated and applied by BSUK's members.

The Group has designed a checklist for clubs and other organisations to monitor their own compliance with the requirements set out in this booklet; this is contained in **Appendix 4**. From time to time, checks will be conducted to verify the results of this self-monitoring procedure.

The Group will make an annual report to the NGB's Executive Committee on the progress of its activities in implementing and monitoring these procedures, and on the incidence and outcome of cases that have arisen in the year.

APPENDIX 1

Volunteer reference form

has expressed an interest in becoming a volunteer, and has given your name as a referee. If you are happy to provide this reference all the information contained on the form will remain absolutely confidential and will only be shared with the applicant's immediate supervisor should they be offered a volunteer position. We would appreciate you being candid in your evaluation of this person. If you would prefer to respond by telephone, please do so – contact details are set out below.

How long have you known this person? _____

In what capacity? _____

Would this person be suitable to work with children and vulnerable adults? _____

How would you describe their personality? _____

Signed _____

Position _____ Date _____

Address _____

_____ Telephone _____

The above should be regarded only as the minimum information that must be obtained in relation to Child Protection. In practice requests for references are likely to include further questions relevant to the particular circumstances.

Give full contact details of the person to whom the reference is to be sent, including name, address, telephone number and any other relevant details.

APPENDIX 2

Procedures for obtaining CRB Disclosure

Who needs to be checked?

All club personnel (including non-member helpers) who will have significant access to young people and/or vulnerable adults must be checked. The Club Welfare Officer (CWO) should keep a record of all these personnel and ensure that they have been vetted through the CRB.

Volunteers, that is people who spend time working at your club, unpaid (except for out of pocket expenses), for the benefit of others, do not have to pay for their disclosure. However, a charge is made to BSUK's account when a form is requested and is only cancelled on return of the completed form. It is therefore important that any requested forms are returned. It should be pointed out to those requiring a CRB disclosure that a previous criminal record is not necessarily a bar to working in Baseball or Softball. A copy of the BSUK Policy on the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders is available on the website and should be made available to those completing CRB Application forms should they wish.

Obtaining the CRB Form

Persons who are required to obtain a 'Disclosure' from the CRB will need to the BSUK office to obtain an Enhanced form. Photocopies are not permitted. It is essential that you request an Enhanced disclosure as the CRB will not accept changes to this part of the form. If you are a volunteer you must state that you are a volunteer as a charge will be made for those taking up paid posts.

Completing the CRB Form

Please read the guidance notes sent to you by the CRB with your form and note their request for the form to be completed in black ink. Any mistakes should be crossed through and the correct information written in the given boxes immediately to the right if space permits, or as close as possible to the intended area. Do not use liquid paper – the CRB will reject these forms. A guidance document produced by BSUK is available from the BSUK website entitled 'CRB Disclosure Forms: The Most Common Mistakes'.

Please complete sections A, B, C, D and H only. Section A must include your National Insurance Number. Under section B, Position applied for should read "Volunteer Coach" or similar and organisation name, "BaseballSoftballUK". Under section H, sign both boxes

Documentation required

Photocopies are not permitted. Applicants need to provide at least 3 original documents as evidence of identity. These must all be in the applicant's name as given on the form including any middle names, and any addresses must be the same as the current address given on the form. At least one primary source must be provided, e.g. passport, driving licence or original birth certificate. At least one should contain a photograph of the applicant and at least one must contain their date of birth. Two others, from a secondary source, must be recent, and show the applicant's current address. These might be utility bills, bank/building society statements, credit card statements, work permit/VISA, marriage/birth certificates etc. The CWO should be able to help identify which documents may be used.

Checking Identity

The Club Welfare Officer should carefully check the documentation against the details shown in Sections A-H of the form. A 'Documentary Evidence Sheet' must be included listing ALL documents checked. Ensure a likeness check is carried out where photo documents are seen. You may have a BSUK trained "Responsible Person" in your locality who can verify your documentation so it does not need to be sent to the office. A list of Responsible Persons will be available on the website, or you can contact the BSUK office: 020 7453 7055 option 2.

Sending the Form to BSUK

The completed form should then be sent to the Main Office at the BSUK, 5th Floor, Ariel House, 74A Charlotte Street, London, W1T4QJ

Payment

CRB checks for volunteers are free of charge; however you must state this at the time of applying for your form. Checks for club employees carry a charge and this fee, payable to BSUK must accompany the form. The fee is paid by BSUK to the CRB on account.

Disclosure

The result of the check, 'the Disclosure', will be sent to the applicant and to BSUK. BSUK will deal with information received as required of a Registered Body with the CRB and as described in the document BSUK Policy on the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders. Clubs will be advised of the names of persons for whom checks have been completed. In the event that a person is not suitable to work in the position applied for, the BSUK Child Protection Officer will notify the Club Welfare Officer. It is not possible to share any of the information given by the CRB, Police or Social Services, which may be additional to that on the applicant's Disclosure certificate, and which may have influenced this decision.

Suitability for Responsibility

It is important to emphasise that the absence of any relevant disclosure emerging from this vetting process does not guarantee that the individual is safe to work with children, so it should not be relied on exclusively. It is only one of a number of factors in the initial assessment of the person's suitability for this responsibility.

Further Advice

Advice or assistance on any aspect of Child Protection and BSUK's policy can be obtained from the BSUK Child Protection Officer. The BSUK Coaching and Development Team can provide advice on training.

There are a number of BSUK documents specifically relevant to the procedures of obtaining a Disclosure through BSUK which are available from the National Office and BSUK's website.



APPENDIX 3

Incident report form (use extra pages as required)

Name of child

Age/date of birth

/ /

Parent/Carer's name

Home address

Telephone

Are you reporting your own concerns or passing on those of someone else? Give details of witnesses

Brief description of what has prompted the concerns: include date, time, and location etc of any specific incidents

Any physical signs? Behavioural signs? Indirect signs?

Have you spoken to the child? If so, what was said?

Have you spoken to the parent(s)? If so, what was said?

Has anybody been alleged to be the abuser? If so, give details, including relationship with the child
Have you consulted anyone else? Give details

Your name and position

To whom reported and date of reporting? Give contact information for future reference

Signature

Date



APPENDIX 4

Child Protection audit checklist

Name of club _____

Welfare Officer _____

Name _____

Address _____

Home phone number _____

Email address _____

(please tick where appropriate)

Is the identity of the Welfare Officer and the procedure for reporting any concerns?

- made known to junior members?
- made known to parents?
- on display in the club?
- Is the Welfare Officer independent of any direct role involving activities with young people, such as junior coordinator or coach?
- Is parental consent for possible emergency medical attention obtained for all junior members?
- Has the club formally adopted the BSUK Child Protection procedures in its constitution?
- Is the Sports Coach UK Code of Conduct on display?

Have all junior coaches and others with access to young people:

- satisfied the Welfare Officer of their suitability for the role?
- completed a self declaration form or CRB Disclosure?
- been made conversant with the BSUK Child Protection procedures?
- Has it been made clear that access to young people is restricted to those who have satisfied these requirements?

List all junior coaches and others with access to young people. Against each name mark 'CRB' or 'SD', to show that they have obtained a CRB Disclosure or (only before 1.4.03) completed a self-declaration form, and the date of doing so. (use extra sheet if necessary y)

Signed

Position

Date



APPENDIX 5

Useful contact reference

- ◆ BaseballSoftballUK
5th Floor, Ariel House
74A Charlotte Street
London
W1T 4QJ
Telephone: 020 7453 7055
www.baseballsoftballuk.com

- ◆ Criminal Records Bureau
PO Box 91
Liverpool L69 2UH
Helpline 0870 90 90 811
www.crb.gov.uk

- ◆ NSPCC Child Protection in Sport
Unit 3 Gilmour Close
Beaumont Leys
Leicester LE4 1EZ
0116 234 7278
www.cpsu.org.uk

- ◆ NSPCC Child Protection Helpline
(This provides free advice on a
24 hour basis to anyone concerned
about child abuse)
0808 800 5000

- ◆ NSPCC Childline
(This provides a free confidential
counselling service for children to use)
0800 1111

- ◆ Police and Social Services
Consult your telephone directory for the
most relevant local numbers

- ◆ Rape Crisis Centre
info@rapecrisis.org.uk

Appendix 6

Guidance for Communication

These guidelines must be followed when dealing with a complaint or allegation to ensure the young person and the alleged remains informed and supported throughout the process.

It is important that all parties in the case are kept well informed of the processes and timescales. Communication with all the parties must be kept neutral at all times; a verdict must not be apportioned until the case has been given a true and fair hearing.

- ◆ The case must be treated with a fair and transparent process at all times.
- ◆ Ensure that all parties receive a copy of the BaseballSoftballUK Good Practice in Baseball and Softball and Welfare Policy.
- ◆ It is important that all parties know that suspension is a **neutral** act; it protects **all** parties involved.
- ◆ The Club Welfare Officer will be conduit for communications between the parties and BaseballSoftballUK. This person will be the point of contact for the respective parties for the duration of the case, if either party have queries or concerns they should contact the CWO. The DP will relay any information, progress etc. from BSUK.
- ◆ The CWO must be neutral to the case and cannot be a member of the Case Management Group dealing with the case.
- ◆ Ensure clear and regular communication with all parties take place throughout the case, e.g. weekly phone calls, letters, emails etc. Parties should be kept well informed at all times and should know when they can expect further communication (i.e. state at the end of each letter, email, phone call when they can next expect to hear from you again).

Appendix 7

Advice and Support for Individuals Receiving a Disclosure

If you have personally received a disclosure you may wish to speak with someone confidentially to help you deal with what you have heard. You may also feel the need to be reassured that the issues are being dealt with in the best possible way with the interests of the child or young person being paramount.

You will be able to discuss the disclosure with BaseballSoftballUK's Lead Child Protection Officers, and they will be able to keep you informed of the case and its progress. However, you may wish to speak to someone outside of the sport's environment.

Clearly confidentiality is essential and therefore when seeking support or guidance from a recommended source as detailed below you will be expected to keep the personal details (names of individuals concerned, location etc.) confidential. The following contact details provide a variety of potential support mechanisms for you to approach.

NSPCC Helpline

0808 800 5000

24 hour free and confidential telephone help line that provides counselling, information and advice to anyone concerned about a child at risk of ill treatment or abuse.

Care Line

0208 541 1177

Confidential crisis telephone counselling service for children, young people and adults.

The Samaritans

08457 90 90 90

www.samaritans.org.uk

Nationwide, non-religious, non-political 24 hour confidential support.

Victim Support

0845 3030 900

Local Victim Support services provide emotional support, information and practical help for victims and witnesses.

Self Help

www.selfhelp.org.uk

The UK's free online specialised child protection resources. A general list of 1,000 self help organisations in the UK.

Appendix 8

Advice and Support for Those Who Have Reported Concerns or an Incident

Once you have reported a concern to your Club Welfare Officer it will then be reported directly to BaseballSoftballUK's Lead Protection Officers immediately. You may find the following information regarding the process of your case and what you can expect useful as a form of support and guidance.

It is also advised if you do not already have a copy of BSUK's Welfare Policy and Good Practice in Baseball and Softball, that you obtain one as soon as possible. It details exactly how your case will be handled.

- ◆ The case will be treated with a fair and transparent process at all times.
- ◆ If the accused is suspended from their role it is important to remember this is a neutral act, it protects all parties involved in the case.
- ◆ The Club Welfare Officer will be your point of contact for the duration of the case, if you have queries or concerns you should contact them initially.
- ◆ Your CWO will be neutral to the case; they will not be a member of the Case Management Group who will be dealing with your case.
- ◆ You will receive regular communication in the form of telephone calls, letters and emails regarding your case from your CWO. You will be kept up to date with the progress of your case at all times.

You may find the following information sources useful. They will always provide someone to listen and offer support:

NSPCC Helpline

0808 800 5000

24 hour free and confidential telephone help line that provides counselling, information and advice to anyone concerned about a child at risk of ill treatment or abuse.

Child Line

0800 1111

24 hour free and confidential telephone help line for children.

Care Line

0208 541 1177

Confidential crisis telephone counselling service for children, young people and adults.

The Samaritans

08457 90 90 90

www.samaritans.org.uk

Nationwide, non-religious, non-political 24 hour confidential support.

Victim Support

0845 3030 900

Local Victim Support services provide emotional support, information and practical help for victims and witnesses.

Self Help

www.selfhelp.org.uk

The UK's free online specialised child protection resources. A general list of 1,000 self help organisations in the UK.

Appendix 9

Information for Those against Whom a Complaint of Poor Practice or an Allegation of Abuse Has Been Made

If you have been notified by BaseballSoftballUK that there are reported causes for concern regarding your behaviour towards or with young people, you may find the following information regarding the process of the case and what you can expect useful as a form of support and guidance.

It is also advised, if you do not already have a copy of BaseballSoftballUK's Welfare Policy and Good Practice, that you obtain one as soon as possible. It details exactly how your case will be handled.

- ◆ You will be treated with a fair and transparent process at all times
- ◆ If you are suspended from their role it is important to remember this is a neutral act, it protects all parties involved in the case.
- ◆ The Club Welfare Officer will be your point of contact for the duration of the case, if you have queries or concerns you should contact them initially.
- ◆ Your CWO will be neutral to the case; they will not be a member of the Case Management Group who will be dealing with your case.
- ◆ You will receive regular communication in the form of telephone calls, letters and emails regarding your case from your CWO. You will be kept up to date with the progress of your case at all times.

You may find the following information sources useful:

NSPCC Helpline

0808 800 5000

24 hour free and confidential telephone help line that provides counselling, information and advice to anyone concerned about a child at risk of ill treatment or abuse.

Care Line

0208 541 1177

Confidential crisis telephone counselling service for children, young people and adults.

The Samaritans

08457 90 90 90

www.samaritans.org.uk

Nationwide, non-religious, non-political 24 hour confidential support.

Many thanks to the Amateur Rowing Association for their help and assistance.