



**Oxfordshire
Hockey Association**

Coaching Practice and Child Protection

*A partnership between coaches,
children and their parents*

Oxfordshire Hockey Association (OHA) are committed to Child Protection to ensure that the child's interests and protection are at the centre of all members club policies and procedures.

This guide was written to address the following issues associated with coaching and working with children and young people:

- Child protection policies and procedures
- The coaching method, aims and objectives
- Coach conduct and behaviour
- Responsibilities of the coach, child and parent

The OHA does not want to impose unrealistic targets on coaches and wants to promote a friendly and fun attitude to coaching. However in these increasingly litigious times it is felt that all coaches must be aware of the standards expected of them as much for their own protection as the protection of the child. It is also recognised that the role of the parent is crucial within the coaching process and this document sets out some basic do's and don'ts from the coaching perspective.



Child Protection Policy and Procedures

POLICY

Oxfordshire HA accepts that its main responsibility is for the well being and safety of those young players who are members of affiliated clubs. This is done in the belief that by placing their welfare at the centre of our concerns we are providing a solid foundation for the development of our players of the future and for effective Child Protection practice.

Oxfordshire HA adopts the Child Protection Guidelines for Good Practice issued by the English Hockey Association, together with the guidance given by the National Coaching Foundation. All coaches are expected to adhere to the principles outlined in these documents.

It is also recognised that Child Protection is a mutual commitment between coaches and parents/guardians. Notwithstanding the Child Protection procedures laid out below, coaches will work with parents/guardians to develop a mutually beneficial relationship. As part of their training, all coaches should be given Child Protection Awareness Training.

Each club should appoint a Child Welfare Person (CWP) who will have the responsibility for ensuring that the club's procedures below are carried out in the correct manner. In the event of any incident involving the CWP, the Youth Development Officer, or similar named person, will act in his/her place. At the core of all these procedures is the overriding principle that no child(ren) will be put at any further risk.

PROCEDURES

Child Protection issues fall very broadly into the following categories:

- Bullying
- Allegation of abuse/neglect
- Suspicion of abuse/neglect
- Disclosure of abuse/neglect
- Going home procedure

The following are procedures that coaches will follow in the event of any of the above.

Bullying

Investigate allegations/suspicions fully.

Inform Child Welfare Person.

Talk to bully and victim separately.

Take appropriate action, such as:

- Apology from bully.
- Inform parents.
- Return of any 'borrowed' items.
- Support for coach and/or victim.
- Encourage change in bullies behaviour.
- Consider sanctions against perpetrators.
- Inform other coaches about incident and action taken.

Keep a record of incident(s) and actions taken.

Arrange a follow up meeting with victims family reviewing progress.

Allegation of abuse/neglect

Listen to allegations.

Make notes on what has been alleged.

Inform the Child Welfare Person of the allegations immediately.

The CWP will decide on the appropriate action, which may be:

- Inform Oxfordshire Social Services (Child Protection City team) on 01865 815030.
- Inform Thames Valley police on 01865 266000.

Maintain confidentiality.

Do not inform parents if allegation involves them, otherwise inform parents of your actions (this is best done by the CWP).

Suspicion of abuse/neglect

A suspicion of abuse or neglect should be discussed with the CWP in the first instance, he/she will then deal with the suspicion in the appropriate manner.

No information should be given to anyone else, confidentiality is paramount.

Do not inform parents if suspicion involves them.

Do not discuss suspicions with child.

Disclosure of abuse/neglect

Listen to what the child has to say with patience and without comment but try and assess if immediate protection is needed.

At the earliest opportunity make notes on what has been disclosed.

Inform the CWP of the disclosure immediately.

The CWP will decide on the appropriate action, which may be:

- Inform Oxfordshire Social Services (Child Protection, City team) on 01865 815030.
- Inform Thames Valley police on 01865 266000.
- Inform the Chief Executives Office of the EHA on 01908 544614 (if a coach is implicated).

If the disclosure involves the child's parents, do not inform them. The CWP should discuss the disclosure with Oxfordshire Social Services, who will discuss the matter with parents.

If the disclosure involves a coach, he or she should not be put in a situation whereby they come into contact with the child until the issue has been investigated and resolved (this is for the safety of the coach as well as the welfare of the child).

Going home procedure

In the event of a child not being picked up after a match or training session the coach should make contact with the parents.

If parents are out of contact the coach must not leave the child at the pitch unsupervised.

The CWP should be advised of the situation.

As a rule coaches should not take children in their cars without the permission of parents. Lone children should only be taken in the back seat of a car.

In extreme cases the police should be informed by the CWP.

Parents or nominated responsible adult, must collect players (under 12) from the pitch and not allow them to walk to where their cars are parked.

If a child (under 12) wishes to make his or her own way home this must be confirmed in writing from a parent and arrangements must be safe and satisfactory to the club.

Coaching: A Guide for Good Practice

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- To provide a safe, enjoyable, fair, structured, challenging, rewarding and positive experience for all individuals.
- To identify players strengths and weaknesses and work on these to develop and improve the individuals game.
- To develop a team where each player is aware of their role and responsibilities to enable the team to play to its full potential.

COACHING SESSIONS

Coaches must...

- Be aware of the Child Protection policy of the club and the procedures to follow in the event of suspected child abuse or bullying.
- Prepare a coaching plan before each session .
- Ensure that planned activities are appropriate for the age, maturity, experience and ability of all individuals in a group.
- Promote fair play in accordance with the rules of the game.
- Ensure they have sufficient equipment to carry out the planned session.
- Keep a register of players who attend each training session and submit a copy to the Secretary at the end of each term.
- Ensure that at the end of each coaching session, no child under 14 is left at the venue unattended.
- Be aware of the club disciplinary procedures

Coaches should...

- Ensure that a recognised first aider is in attendance and that they have ready access to a telephone in case of emergencies.
- Set targets for individual or group activities that are attainable but challenging.
- Have at least one assistant for each session to maintain an appropriate coach to child ratio.
- Arrive at least fifteen minutes before each session.

MATCHES

- All players must be given advanced notice of their selection, and precise details of the pitch times and travel arrangements for away games. Players who are not selected must also be informed.
- All players picked should play for some of the game. Players who are unlikely to take a large part of a match should be informed prior to the game starting.
- All players must be aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- The coach must ensure that there is an umpire. If the coach umpires, then a nominated assistant must be present to arrange substitutions.

The coach is responsible for the collection and accounting for any match fees and the collection and disbursement of any travel expenses.

COACH BEHAVIOUR

Coaches must...

- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person and treat everyone equally within the context of the game or training session.

- Encourage and guide players to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and performance.
- Consistently display high standards of behaviour and appearance.
- Never physically or verbally abuse or neglect players and actively stop such behaviour between players.
- Not exert undue influence to obtain personal benefit or reward.
- Be committed to a full training and match programme and arrange for suitable cover when unable to attend.

Coaches should...

- At the outset clarify with players (and where appropriate with their parents) exactly what is expected of them and what players are entitled to expect from the coach.
- Develop a working relationship with players based on mutual trust and respect.
- Promote the positive aspects of the sport and never condone rule violations or the use of prohibited substances.
- Encourage players at all levels to help them improve their standard of play and to continue to participate in the sport.
- Understand the ambition of individual players and seek to help them fulfil their potential.

SAFETY

- Coaches are responsible for the safety of the children whilst under their instruction. Any behaviour by the players that is likely to lead to an accident or injury must be stopped.
- Coaches must place the well-being and safety of the players above the development of performance.
- Players must not be allowed to take part in sessions unless they are suitably protected. Field players must wear shin guards and (preferably) mouth guards: Goalkeepers must wear full protective equipment.
- Coaches are responsible for ensuring that the playing surface is safe and there are no dangerous objects on or around the playing area.
- Coaches must ensure that a first aid kit is present at all coaching sessions and games. Coaches must ensure that there is a means of contacting an ambulance in the event of an emergency.

ACCIDENTS

- In the event of an accident, a first aider should determine if the injury requires a hospital visit. If a hospital visit is required, an ambulance should be called in preference to transporting the child to hospital in a car.
- The group must never be left unattended. If the coach is called away from the group to administer first aid, then their assistant should take over the session.
- An accident report form must be completed for all injuries, however minor. If any advice is given, it must be noted on the report and if possible signed by the person collecting the child at the end of the session.
- Completed accident report forms must be handed to the club secretary for filing.

COACH DEVELOPMENT

Coaches must...

- Be subject to Police checks

Coaches should...

- Hold an up to date nationally recognised EHA coaching qualification.
- Keep up to date with current coaching practices and methods.
- Hold appropriate insurance cover.
- Have a current first aid certificate from a recognised body.

EQUIPMENT

Coaches must bring a fully stocked first aid kit and should bring sufficient equipment for each session.

Typically this will be:

- Coaching Plan
- Balls, Cones, Bibs, Spare sticks, Whistle, Watch / Stopwatch.
- Captains arm band
- Shirts (for matches)
- Goalkeeping Kit
- Spare shin pads
- Extra supplies of water
- Ice packs

ADMINISTRATION

Coaches are responsible for administering the training sessions and matches which includes taking to each session:

- A register of names (to be completed)
- Accident forms
- New starter forms
- Publicity materials

TRAVELLING AWAY

Coaches must...

- Provide parents and players with precise details of the trip.
- Have parents written permission for the child's involvement and an agreed communication process. This will be sought on the Consent Form
- Ensure in advance that there is sufficient transport and that there is a suitable ratio of adults to children.
- Always have mixed gender adults if the children are mixed gender.
- Always be the first at the meeting point and the last to leave.
- Ensure that children are properly restrained in vehicles.

WORKING WITH PARENTS

- Parents should be actively encouraged to watch, provide transport to away games or otherwise take part in the coaching sessions where appropriate.
- Parents should be encouraged to offer positive comments to their children and actively discouraged from shouting abusive or negative comments.
- Coaches should talk to parents to make sure they are aware of the duty of care, to determine other sporting commitments and to advise on clothing and equipment.

Parents are responsible for bringing their child to and from the pitch, for notifying the coach of injuries, for providing food and drink and ensuring that their child has adequate protection from sun, rain and cold. Coaches are responsible for the welfare and safety of the child whilst on the pitch.

Parents: Working with the coach

"Remember that your child takes part for their enjoyment, not yours."

PARENTS: DO'S AND DON'TS

DO...

- ... get to know your child's coach as the coach will play an important role in your child's development.
- ... respect the coach's opinion as they are likely to be more knowledgeable than you.
- ... establish clear lines of communication and find out when it is convenient and appropriate to contact the coach.
- ... encourage your child to improve their skills through coaching sessions.
- ... teach your child that winning is not everything and it is important to recognise and reward effort.
- ... encourage your child to play by the rules.
- ... set a good example and applaud players from both teams.
- ... offer to help with transport for away games provide lifts to others for training if required.
- ... remember that your child takes part for their enjoyment, not yours.

DON'T...

- ... yell at your child or other children for making a mistake as they are all trying their hardest.
- ... ignore bad behaviour, cheating or bad manners by your child. Reasonable prompt action is appropriate.
- ... coach from the sidelines. If you want to get involved, talk to the coach after the competition.
- ... abuse the officials as they are volunteers and your child cannot play without them
- ... forget that your child is still growing so training which may be appropriate for an adult can have adverse effects on the development of a young child.

If advised by the coach, **don't** attend throughout every session and every match as it is important for your child's development in sport that they are trusted to make the correct decisions during training or competition.

- ... force your child to participate if they do not want to.

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Surbiton Hockey Club – Child Protection & Guidelines for Good Practice
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