WEIGHTLIFTING WALES
CODI PWYSAU CYMRU

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

Wales Weightlifting Federation CIC

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FOREWORD

Terminology and definitions

Abuse: This describes physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial abuse (and includes abuse taking place in any setting, whether in a private dwelling, an institution or any other place).

Adult at Risk: Describes anyone over 18 years of age who is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect and has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs), and as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.(S 126 of the Social Services and Well-being Act 2014)

Carer: A Carer is someone who has the responsibility for providing or arranging care for someone else who, because of long term illness or disability or age, is not able to care for themselves.

Children: A child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. The term 'children' therefore means 'children and young people' throughout.

Child protection: The particular activity undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect.

Disabled: The Disability Discrimination Act (1995) defines a person as having a disability 'if he has a physical or mental impairment which has substantial and long-term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day to day activities'.

Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB): Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB) are strategic bodies with responsibilities under the Children Act 2004 to help ensure effective safeguarding of children across key agencies involved with children.

In loco parentis: In loco parentis (from Latin meaning 'in place of a parent') refers to a person who has been given explicit permission to assume parental responsibility for a child by his or her parents or legal guardian.

Regulated activity: For the purposes of identifying roles or individuals qualifying for Disclosure and Barring Checks (DBS) regulated activity is defined as: involving contact

with children or adults at risk and is of a specified nature (e.g. teaching, training, care, supervision, advice, medical treatment or in certain circumstances transport) on a frequent, intensive and/or overnight basis; or involving contact with children or adults at risk in a specified place (e.g. schools, care homes etc), frequently or intensively. For more information, visit: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/dbs-eligibility-guidance

Need to know: In the context of sharing confidential information, disclosing details only to those people who have to be informed in the interests of a child or children. The factors that need to be considered when determining whether to disclose information include: the reason for sharing the information; the level of detail that needs to be disclosed; with whom the information will be shared; and whether disclosing the information is a proportionate response to the need to protect a child from harm.

Position of Trust: A person is in a position of trust if the work they do, or the nature of the service they provide, means that they: **are likely to have contact with children or adults at risk as part of their employment or voluntary work**.

Parent: The parent refers to the person who holds parental responsibility or the person given the responsibility for the day-to-day care of the child on behalf of the parent or an official body.

Safeguarding: Safeguarding refers to a range of proactive measures taken to keep children safe and promote their wellbeing, including child protection.

Social Services: Throughout the procedures the generic term ‘social services’ is used to represent the relevant local authority social services functions with regard to children.

SECTION 1: POLICY

1.1 Introduction

Participation in Weightlifting can provide valuable life experiences and has the potential to offer significant learning opportunities for children that can help develop valuable life skills as well as enhancing self-esteem and confidence.

Although the majority of children benefit from participation in sport, some young people have experienced abuse and/or poor practice linked to their participation. In addition, some children who are participating in Weightlifting may be experiencing abuse unrelated to the sport, either at home or within the wider community.

Coaches, volunteers and officials are in the privileged position of having an opportunity to build strong relationships with young people in their care and are therefore ideally placed to recognise signs that a child may be being abused. This can be achieved by being alert to and aware of the risks which individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to children and being aware of and responding to any indicators that a child may be experiencing abuse.

Weightlifting Wales recognises the importance of ensuring there are procedures in place that outline the appropriate steps to take in the event of a concern. In addition, it is essential to ensure there are comprehensive policies and practical guidance that promote the welfare of children and minimise any identifiable risks within the sports environment.

Weightlifting Wales aspires for the sport to be provided in an environment where individuals feel able to raise concerns and where poor practice and inappropriate behaviour can be openly challenged. This can be facilitated by championing the promotion of children's welfare and providing access to advice and training to help support staff, members and volunteers to understand their safeguarding responsibilities.

The development of the Weightlifting Wales policy and procedures is important to support both Weightlifting Wales and Weightlifting clubs and members, to fulfil their duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their care and ensure a consistent and best practice approach across the sport.

1.2 Background

The Welsh Assembly Government has adopted the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child as the basis of all work for children and young people in Wales. Seven core aims have been identified, which should inform all activities for children and young people:

- have a flying start in life;
- have a comprehensive range of education and learning opportunities;
- enjoy the best possible health and are free from abuse, victimisation and exploitation;
- have access to play, leisure, sporting and cultural activities;
- are listened to, treated with respect, and have their race and cultural identity recognised;
- have a safe home and a community which supports physical and emotional wellbeing;
- are not disadvantaged by poverty.

Weightlifting Wales can make a significant contribution to the achievement of these outcomes for children involved in the sport. Organisations that provide services for children (defined in the Children Act 1989 as anyone under the age of 18 years) have a duty to safeguard and promote their welfare. The concept of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined within: Working Together to protect Children 2018:

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/942454/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_inter_agency_guidance.pdf)

- Protecting children from abuse and neglect;
- Preventing impairment of their health or development; and
- Ensuring that they receive safe and effective care, so as to enable them to have optimum life.

Working Together to protect Children 2018 sets out how all agencies and professionals should work in partnership to safeguard and promote children's welfare and protect them from harm. The guidance acknowledges that although providers of leisure services designed for children have varying degrees of contact with children, they should all have in place procedures which are linked with Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures.

The procedures should detail referral and other responses to information that may arise concerning child protection concerns, and the requirements for staff training for those working with children. Working practices and procedures should be adopted that minimise situations where abuse of children may occur, such as unobserved contact. It is also good practice to draw up codes of conduct for coaches, parents and children's participation in activities, and disseminate these codes of conduct as widely as possible.

Working Together to protect Children 2018 provides the working basis for Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2019. The procedures provide common standards to guide child protection practice in Wales.

The procedures identify that anyone working or volunteering with children should:

- Understand their role and responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children;
- Be familiar with and follow their organisation's procedures and protocols for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and know who to contact in their organisation to express concerns about a child's welfare;
- Be alert to indicators of abuse and neglect; Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2019
- Understand the principles and practice contained in Working Together 2018
- Have received child protection training to a level commensurate with their role and responsibilities;
- Know when and how to refer any concerns about child abuse and neglect to social services or the police.

It is essential that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is deeply embedded in the provision of service for children and reflects the principles and practices outlined in Working Together 2018. Weightlifting Wales has developed comprehensive policies and procedures that comply with the
Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2019

The implementation of this safeguarding policy, associated procedures and practice guidelines will help to minimise the risk of abuse, foster an environment where concerns can be shared and inappropriate behaviour challenged and provide parents and carers with reassurance that they are leaving their children in a safe setting.

1.3 Statement of intent

Weightlifting Wales acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and is fully committed to developing robust policy and procedures that minimise the risk of children experiencing abuse within the sport setting.

Weightlifting Wales aims to ensure all children have a positive, enjoyable and beneficial experience in weightlifting in a safe and child centred environment.

Weightlifting Wales recognises that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and expects all staff, members and volunteers to be fully committed to promoting and implementing the policy throughout the sport.

The Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures are mandatory for anyone within Weightlifting Wales who is involved either directly or indirectly with children as part of their role in the sports of weightlifting an/or para powerlifting. Anyone who supplies a service for children on behalf of the NGB or an NGB registered club must demonstrate that they have met equivalent standards as those set out in the policy and will be required to comply with Weightlifting Wales safeguarding procedures and guidance for the duration of their involvement with the sport.

1.4 Core Principles

The Policy is based upon the following fundamental principles:

- The welfare of children is paramount;
- Children's needs are the central consideration in all decision making;
- All children and young people, regardless of gender identity, sexual orientation, age, parental status, disability, religion or belief, ethnicity, or socio/economic background have a right to be protected from abuse;
- There is a duty of care to safeguard children and work in partnership with relevant stakeholders (police, social services, NSPCC, children, parents/carers, other organisations) is key to meeting this responsibility; as outlined in the Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2019.
- Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility, as outlined in the Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2019.

1.5 Legislation and government guidance

The following are the key pieces of legislation and government guidance that are most relevant to the policy and procedures:

Children Act 1989

The Act places a general duty on local authorities to promote and safeguard the welfare of children in need in their area by providing a range of services appropriate to those children's needs

Human Rights Act 1998

The Human Rights Act is a UK law passed in 1998. It lets you defend your rights in UK courts and compels public organisations – including the Government, police and local councils – to treat everyone equally, with fairness, dignity and respect.

Data Protection Act 2018

The Data Protection Act 2018 controls how your personal information is used by organisations, businesses or the government.

Sexual Offences Act 2003

An Act to make new provision about sexual offences, their prevention and the protection of children from harm from other sexual acts, and for connected purposes.

Children Act 2004

It aims to improve and integrate children's services, promote early intervention, provide strong leadership and bring together different professionals in multi- disciplinary teams in order achieve positive outcomes for children and young people and their families.

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

This Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (SVGA) 2006 was passed **to help avoid harm, or risk of harm, by preventing people who are deemed unsuitable to work with children and vulnerable adults from gaining access to them through their work**.

Working Together 2018

Statutory guidance on inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/942454/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_inter_agency_guidance.pdf

Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

An Act to provide for the destruction, retention, use and other regulation of certain evidential material; to impose consent and other requirements in relation to certain processing of biometric information relating to children; separated into seven sections.

Preventing Abuse in Positions of Trust in Sport 2022

As of 28 June 2022 the law in England and Wales states that those in a position of trust in sports organisations, such as a coach, cannot legally have a sexual relationship with young people they look after, under 18 years old.

1.6 Objectives

Weightlifting Wales is highly committed to fulfilling its safeguarding responsibilities. The key objectives include:

- To ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and is able to contribute effectively to the safeguarding process;
- To ensure that all those working or volunteering with children within the sport are able to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and young people and able to contribute effectively to safeguarding;
- To ensure everyone has access to opportunities to learn about safeguarding at a level commensurate with their role and responsibilities;
- To promote safe practice and ensure appropriate and timely action is taken to address poor practice;
- To ensure that all allegations or suspicions of abuse are reported to the police and/or social services and contribute as required to the child protection process;
- To foster effective partnerships with British Weightlifting and clubs to promote safeguarding and effectively manage the sport's response to concerns arising;
- To manage effectively information sharing with other relevant agencies in the interests of safeguarding children;
- To operate robust recruitment and selection process to help deter and prevent unsuitable people from becoming involved in the sport and ensure anyone who is subsequently considered unsuitable is removed.

1.7 National Governing Body (NGB) Responsibilities

The overall responsibility for safeguarding rests with the Weightlifting Wales Board of Directors, who will ensure Weightlifting Wales procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children comply with the Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2019. Weightlifting Wales has appointed a Lead Officer for Safeguarding who will be responsible for managing the response to safeguarding concerns and implementing the NGB policy. Weightlifting Wales will also ensure there is a nominated NGB welfare officer for each club, activity or event that involves children.

Weightlifting Wales will develop and monitor an implementation plan that sets out how Weightlifting Wales will work towards meeting the requirements of the Framework for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in and through Sport (NSPCC CPSU 2009).

Weightlifting Wales is responsible for regulating the conduct of individuals within the sport of Weightlifting in Wales and will work in partnership with British Weightlifting to ensure that all concerns, allegations or suspicions of abuse in relation to any child are swiftly reported to the Police and/or Social Services and all relevant information is shared to support these organisations to fulfil their safeguarding roles.

Weightlifting Wales works in partnership with British Weight Lifting in the management of safeguarding concerns and will share any safeguarding concerns and will jointly manage cases that relate to individuals who are also members of British Weightlifting.

Weightlifting Wales have established a Safeguarding Case Management Group made up of staff, board members and external advisors where appropriate; people with the appropriate safeguarding knowledge, skills and experience. The Group is responsible for determining the appropriate course of action in the event of a safeguarding concern. This will include:

- Reporting of abuse cases to external authorities, if this has not already taken place;
- Agreeing any necessary interim protection measures pending the outcome of the case e.g. suspension of membership;
- Agreeing appropriate remedial action.

The full terms of reference for the Safeguarding Case Management Group can be viewed on the governance page of our website. Link to the document below:

Safeguarding-Case-Management-Group-TOR.pdf

In the event of an allegation against a Weightlifting Wales member, employee or other person with an involvement in the sport, Weightlifting Wales will take action to ensure young people are protected and, where appropriate will support the prosecution of individuals accused of abuse of a child/children.

Weightlifting Wales will work in partnership with clubs and other relevant organisations to ensure all other safeguarding related misconduct or poor practice issues/non-compliance with policy are appropriately addressed.

Weightlifting Wales will require clubs, as a condition of registration to appoint a Welfare Officer who will have the key responsibility for safeguarding within their club.

Weightlifting Wales will require all adults who work or volunteer with children within the sport to attend a basic safeguarding awareness course.

Weightlifting Wales will operate robust safe recruitment and selection processes and will include a requirement for all existing and new staff and members who are working with children (paid or unpaid) and who are eligible to undertake a DBS check.

Weightlifting Wales recognises the importance of providing support to members to comply with the requirements of the policy and procedures and will seek to facilitate the provision of accessible safeguarding training and other learning opportunities.

1.8 Club Responsibilities

All Weightlifting Wales registered clubs that provide activities and opportunities for children have a duty of care to take reasonable steps to ensure their safety and wellbeing.

Weightlifting Wales requires all registered clubs to:

- Formally sign up to the NGB policy and procedures
- Ensure a senior official within the club has the overall responsibility for safeguarding.
- Identify at least one individual designated person (Welfare Officer) within the club to take the lead responsibility for safeguarding. This role should include:
    - Responding to child protection and poor practice concerns in partnership with the NGB Lead Officer and local statutory agencies

if required;

- Promoting the welfare of children and importance of safeguarding;
- Involving young people in the safeguarding process;
- Supporting club staff and volunteers to understand their safeguarding role and responsibilities;
- Carrying out regular reviews of safeguarding within the club and ensuring any identified risks are appropriately managed;
- Promoting safe recruitment and selection practices.

- Ensure all staff and volunteers who are working directly or indirectly with children receive appropriate training and have access to advice on child protection and safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children through the club welfare officer.
- Ensure safe recruitment and selection practices are in operation for all new staff and volunteers working with children
- Ensure that any concerns about poor practice by existing staff and volunteers are addressed
- Engage with young people and their parents/carers to encourage them to feel able to raise concerns and support them to understand how they can contribute to safeguarding.

It is not the role of anyone within the sport to investigate suspected or alleged abuse. It is everyone's responsibility to ensure that all concerns are reported without delay, in line with Weightlifting Wales' procedures, to the WW Lead Safeguarding Officer, to Social Services and/or the Police.

1.9 Equality

Weightlifting Wales recognises the importance of ensuring that there are procedures in place that ensure *all* children are protected from abuse and poor practice. Weightlifting Wales acknowledges that some children, including young people with disabilities or children from an ethnic minority community can be more vulnerable to abuse. Care will be taken to ensure additional safeguards are in place to take account of individual needs and recognise that there may be additional challenges that need to be addressed to help all young people raise concerns.

1.10 Review and monitoring

The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, and in light of:

- Changes in relevant legislation and/or government guidance;
- Requirements of the Local Safeguarding Children Boards, NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit, Sport Wales (and British Weight Lifting);
- Learning from serious cases.

In addition, Weightlifting Wales will review the effectiveness and implementation of the policy and procedures by:

- Monitoring compliance with the policy and procedures;
- Providing an annual report to the Board on all matters relating to safeguarding;
- Carrying out case reviews following the conclusion of any major child protection case within the sport;
- Reviewing the outcomes for the child in cases where the NGB has taken action;
- Seeking the views of key stakeholders in the sport, including young people.

SECTION 2: ABUSE AND POOR PRACTICE

2.1 Recognising Abuse

Children and young people can be abused either through someone inflicting harm, or failing to act to prevent harm. Abuse can be carried out by someone known to the child or (more rarely) by a complete stranger, and by both adults and children of any gender. It is not always easy to recognise abuse, especially as many of the indicators can have other reasonable explanations.

Abuse in all of its forms can affect a child at any age and its impact can be so damaging that, if not treated, it may follow the individual into adulthood. It is important that everyone understands what constitutes abuse, indicators of abuse, what to do, and where to seek advice if abuse is suspected or alleged.

Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2019 provides the following definitions of abuse:

Abuse: Emotional

Emotional abuse is the ongoing emotional maltreatment of a child. It's sometimes called psychological abuse and can seriously damage a child's emotional health and development. Emotional abuse can involve deliberately trying to scare or humiliate a child or isolating or ignoring them. Children who are emotionally abused are often suffering another type of abuse or neglect at the same time.

Emotional abuse includes: humiliating or constantly criticising a child threatening, shouting at a child or calling them names making the child the subject of jokes, or using sarcasm to hurt a child blaming, scapegoating making a child perform degrading acts not recognising a child's own individuality, trying to control their lives pushing a child too hard or not recognising their limitations exposing a child to distressing events or interactions such as domestic abuse or drug taking failing to promote a child's social development not allowing them to have friends persistently ignoring them being absent manipulating a child never saying anything kind, expressing positive feelings or congratulating a child on successes never showing any emotions in interactions with a child, also known as emotional neglect.

Within sport examples of emotional abuse may include:

- continually diminishing a child's efforts;
- placing intolerable pressure on a child to train and/or win;

- imposing developmentally inappropriate expectations on a child.

Abuse: Neglect

This means a failure to meet a person's basic physical, emotional, social or psychological needs, which is likely to result in an impairment of the person's well-being (for example, an impairment of the person's health). Neglect could be intentional, or unintentional.

Child Neglect

Child neglect is a failure on the part of either the male and/or female caregiver or pregnant mother to complete the parenting tasks required to ensure the developmental needs of the child are met. This failure may be associated with parenting issues such as such a drug and alcohol misuse. Neglect should be differentiated from poverty and occurs despite reasonable resources being available to enable the carer/s to complete the parenting tasks to a good enough standard. Whilst neglect is likely to be ongoing and cause cumulative harm, one-off incidents and episodic neglect can affect the health and development of the child. There are a range of parenting behaviours that can be described as neglect:

- Medical neglect: a failure to seek and provide appropriate medical, dental and optical care,
- Nutritional neglect: occurs when the carer fails to pay sufficient attention to the diet for the child who may become obese or fail to thrive
- Supervisory neglect: happens when the carer fails to provide the level of guidance and supervision that ensures the child is safe and protected from harm
- Educational neglect: is more than securing school attendance: it includes a failure on the part of the carer to provide an environment allowing the child to achieve their cognitive potential
- Physical neglect: happens when the child does not receive appropriate physical care necessary for their age and development and/or where the child lives in a physical environment that is not conducive to their health and development healthy and/or is unsafe
- Identity neglect occurs when a parent or carer fails to recognise and address the child or young person's needs in terms of culture, religion, gender and sexuality.

Neglect in a sport may occur if the responsible adult failed to adequately look after children in their care, leading them to be placed at risk of harm for example by consistently failing to ensure the use of appropriate protective equipment or clothing suitable to adverse weather conditions.

Neglect of an Adult at Risk

This includes a failure to access medical care or services, emotional neglect, negligence in the face of risk taking, failure to give prescribed medication, failure to assist in personal hygiene or the provision of food, shelter or clothing.

Abuse: Physical

Physical Abuse to a Child

Physical abuse means deliberately hurting a child or young person. It includes: physical restraint; such as being tied to a bed, locked in a room inflicting burns cutting, slapping, punching, kicking, biting or choking stabbing or shooting withholding food or medical attention drugging denying sleep inflicting pain shaking or hitting babies fabricating or inducing illness (FII).

Abuse: Sexual

Sexual abuse of a Child

There are 2 different types of child sexual abuse. These are called contact abuse and non-contact abuse. Contact abuse involves: touching activities where an abuser makes physical contact with a child, including penetration. It includes: sexual touching of any part of the body, whether the child's wearing clothes or not, rape or penetration by putting an object or body part inside a child's mouth, vagina or anus, forcing or encouraging a child to take part in sexual activity, making a child take their clothes off, touch someone else's genitals or masturbate.

Non-contact abuse involves: non-touching activities, such as grooming, exploitation, persuading children to perform sexual acts over the internet and flashing. It includes encouraging a child to watch or hear sexual acts, not taking proper measures to prevent a child being exposed to sexual activities by others, meeting a child following sexual grooming with the intent of abusing them online, abuse including making, viewing or distributing child abuse images

allowing someone else to make, view or distribute child abuse images showing pornography to a child, sexually exploiting a child for money, power or status (child exploitation).

Sexual Abuse of an Adult at Risk

This includes rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not or could not consent and / or was pressured into consenting.

In sport, activities which might involve physical contact with children could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. Also, the power of the coach over young athletes if misused, may lead to sexually abusive situations developing. There have been a significant number of sexual abuse cases in sport, many of which have involved coaches, both male and female, who have manipulated the child and abused their position of trust. E.g., using a physical coaching technique as a means to touch a child inappropriately, engaging in romantic or sexual relationships with children online, etc.

Physical abuse of an Adult at Risk

This includes hitting, slapping, over or misuse of medication, undue restraint or inappropriate sanctions.

In sport an example of physical abuse could include:

- provision of performance enhancing drugs;
- forcing a child into a physically exhausting and painful training regime;
- designing an intensity of training that fails to consider the capacity of the child's immature and growing body;
- hitting or slapping a child as a form of punishment.

Bullying

Bullying may be perpetrated by another young person or group of people, or by an adult. Bullying is defined as deliberate hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. Bullying can be split into the following categories:

- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding belongings,

threatening gestures)

- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic - because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber - all areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse, mobile threats by text messaging & calls. Misuse of associated technology, e.g. camera & video facilities

As well as the above, in sport bullying may arise when a parent or coach pushes the child too hard to succeed, or a rival athlete or official uses bullying behaviour.

Signs of bullying include:

- Behavioural changes such as reduced concentration and/or becoming withdrawn, clingy, depressed, tearful, emotionally up and down, reluctance to go to training or competitions
- An unexplained drop off in performance
- Physical signs such as stomach aches, headaches, difficulty in sleeping, bed wetting, scratching and bruising, damaged clothes, bingeing e.g. on food, alcohol or cigarettes
- A shortage of money or frequent loss of possessions.

2.2 Preventing abuse in positions of trust in sport

Although young people aged 16 and 17 have reached the age of consent for sexual activity according to UK law, they could be vulnerable to sexual abuse and exploitation in certain situations. This includes sexual activity and manipulation by adults who hold a position of trust, responsibility, or authority in relation to them, and, as a result, have a considerable amount of power and influence on their lives. Sexual offences legislation in the UK underlines that any sexual activity between adults and with children under 16 is illegal and constitutes abuse. exploitation.

As of 28 June 2022 the law in England and Wales states that those in a position of trust in sports organisations, such as a coach, cannot legally have a sexual relationship with young people they look after, under 18 years old.

Within the new policy, sport is defined as:

1. a) any game in which physical skill is the predominant factor, and
2. b) any form of physical recreation which is also engaged in for purposes of competition or display

It is not the case that both (a) and (b) must be met to meet the definition – either one is sufficient.

Those in authority positions in sport can have a positive influence on the welfare of a young person, by providing role models or someone to turn to if they have a concern. But it is important to have clear boundaries in place for the safety of both the young people and the staff, to ensure exploitation cannot take place.

Examples of specific roles include:

- Coach
- Supervisor or instructor in sport
- Support Staff
- Team Manager
- Technical Official

What can sports coaches and others in positions of trust do?

- As someone in a position of trust, you have a responsibility to maintain a positive, healthy relationship with the young people under your authority.
- Ensure that you read, understand, sign up to and comply with the code of conduct/behaviour your club, organisation and Weightlifting Wales has produced for the role you hold
- Maintain a relationship with all participants that is appropriate to your role and reflects positively on the club or organisation you work or volunteer for. Relationships between those in positions of trust and young people in sport should be supportive, positive and aimed at improving the young person's skills, and progress
- Whether or not the code explicitly refers to positions of trust (and what would constitute breach) as someone in a position of authority you should not seek to or engage in sexual activity or sexualised communication or image sharing (including via social media) with 16- or 17-year-olds for whom you are responsible.

If you think that a young person's behaviour indicated that they are seeking to develop or engage in an inappropriate relationship with you, immediately bring this to the

attention of your club welfare officer and the WW Lead Safeguarding Officer. Be careful not to respond to the participant in any way that could be interpreted as encouraging the young person concerned. Make a written record of your concerns and relevant details.

Dealing with a concern about a possible abuse of trust

If you suspect that an abuse of a position of trust has occurred, is occurring or may occur, you should:

- Immediately report to your Club Welfare Officer (CWO) or WW Lead Safeguarding Officer
- Make a written record of your concerns and relevant details
- If you are unable to contact the CWO or WW Lead Safeguarding Officer, or if you think someone is at risk of immediate harm, you must report it to the police or children's social care, you may also contact the NSPCC Helpline for advice in a non-urgent situation
- If you think your concern has not been dealt with appropriately, or there is no CWO to contact, you can contact the following people whose duties include responding to concerns about potential breaches of positions of trust:

    - WW Lead / Deputy Safeguarding Officer
    - BWL Lead Safeguarding Officer
    - Designated Lead Safeguarding Officer of local authority whose details should be available through your local authority's Children's Social Care Department
    - Police

2.3 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. Most people 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 them;
* another child or adult expresses concern about the welfare of a child;
* unexplained changes in a child's behaviour, e.g. becoming very upset, quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper;
* inappropriate sexual awareness that is not typically associated with the child's age or stage of development;
* engaging in sexually explicit behaviour;
* distrust of adults, particularly those whom a close relationship would normally be expected;
* difficulty in making friends;
* being prevented from socialising with others;
* displaying variations in eating patterns including over eating or loss of appetite;
* losing or gaining weight rapidly with no apparent reason;
* becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt.

The above list is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more of the indicators should not be accepted as proof that abuse is taking place. It is **NOT** the responsibility of those involved in Weightlifting Wales to decide that child abuse is occurring. However it is **everyone's** responsibility to be vigilant and act on any concerns.

2.4 Poor practice

There are some behaviours or practices that would be considered poor practice and although highly unacceptable within the sport, would not be fully encapsulated by the definitions of abuse. Nevertheless, they must always be reported, addressed and action taken to prevent reoccurrence.

In some cases, there is a fine line between poor practice and abuse and it may be important to seek guidance from Social Services and/or the Police before a concern is treated as poor practice. If, following consideration by the Welfare Officer, senior officials and, if appropriate, following consultation with statutory authorities and Weightlifting Wales, a concern is deemed to be a matter of poor practice rather than abuse, a suitable course of remedial action should be agreed. Although it is often possible to resolve poor practice thorough guidance, mentoring and additional training, particularly where the individual is willing to accept their conduct was inappropriate, in some instances, poor practice concerns need to be managed as a disciplinary matter by invoking the appropriate policy and procedures.

Practices never to be sanctioned

The following practices are known to be significant risk factors in cases of abuse and can never to be condoned:

- Taking children to your home or other secluded place unaccompanied by others.
- Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games.
- Sharing a room with a child overnight when travelling to and from competition or training venues.
- Allowing or engaging in any form of inappropriate touching.
- Making sexually suggestive remarks.
- Reducing a child to tears as a form of control.
- Allowing children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Allowing allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- Carrying out personal care for a child that the child can do unaided
- Departing from the premises without first supervising the safe dispersal of the children.
- Abusing a privileged position of power or trust.
- Resorting to bullying tactics, or verbal abuse.
- Causing a participant to lose self-esteem by embarrassing, humiliating or undermining the individual.
- Spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from other adults.

It may sometimes be necessary for adults to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are young or are disabled. This would include tasks such as removing outer layers of clothing, tying up hair etc. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and (preferably written) consent of parents and the children involved. There is a need to be responsive to a person's reactions. If a person is fully dependent on you, talk with them about what you are doing and give choices where possible. This is particularly so if you are involved in a task that involves physical contact. Avoid taking on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained.

Some children, particularly children with learning disabilities or serious physical disabilities may require some assistance with using toilet facilities. In some situations, this may lead to increased vulnerability both for the child and the person providing the care, particularly as some children with learning disabilities can find it difficult to set and maintain physical boundaries. Therefore, where a child requires this type of care, a parent/carer or someone trained in the provision of intimate care must be on hand to address these needs.

Incidents that must be reported/recorded In the event that any of the following incidents occur, they should be reported immediately to the appropriate welfare officer, who must make a record of the incident and ensure the parents of the child are informed:

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

It is essential that everyone challenges poor practice, even where there is a belief that the motives of an individual are well meaning. Failure to challenge poor practice can lead to an environment where abuse is more likely to remain unnoticed.

3 RESPONDING TO REPORTS, DISCLOSURES AND CONCERNS

3.1 Introduction

Child abuse concerns can arise in many different situations and contexts. It is not the role of anyone within the sport to investigate possible child abuse concerns but it is essential that all staff and volunteers clearly understand the action that must be taken in the event of:

- A direct disclosure of abuse from a child or young person;
- A disclosure from an adult of abuse that occurred during their childhood (non-recent abuse);
- Observed abuse, neglect or poor practice;
- Observed concerning changes in a child's behaviour, appearance or relationships, or other possible indicators of abuse;
- A report from a third party (e.g. another young person or adult within the club) or via an external organisation.

The following procedures outline the steps that should be taken and provides guidance on sharing relevant information with Social Services and/or police and other relevant organisations without delay and within agreed protocols.
Child protection concerns fall into two categories:

- Internal – arising from behaviour or experiences within the sports organisation or environment (e.g. allegations of abuse by a coach);
- External – arising outside the organisation (e.g. allegations of abuse at home or bullying in school).

As outlined in the Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2019, everyone has a responsibility to respond to any concerns about the welfare of young people - irrespective of whether the cause of the concern is internal or external - and to ensure that they take action by reporting this in line with the organisation's procedures. In some cases, sharing a concern will not trigger an investigation, but may help to build up a picture, along with information from other sources, which suggests that a child may be suffering harm.

If any person has knowledge, concerns or suspicions that a child is suffering, has suffered or is likely to be at risk of harm, it is their responsibility to ensure that the concerns are referred to the NGB's Lead Safeguarding Officer, as well as to the social services or the police, who have the statutory duties and powers to make enquiries and intervene when necessary.

3.2 Responding to a disclosure from a child

If a child discloses that they or another young person is being abused, the person receiving the information should:

- Stay calm and ensure that the child feels safe and is not at any immediate risk.
- Show the child that you have heard what they are saying, and that you take their allegations seriously.
- Encourage the child to talk, but do not prompt or ask leading questions. Don't interrupt when the child is recalling significant events. Don't make the child repeat their account.
- Recognise any difficulties the child may have in explaining the incidents.
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in revealing the information.
- Explain what actions you must take, in a way that is appropriate to the age and understanding of the child.
- Do not promise to keep what you have been told secret or confidential, as you have a responsibility to disclose information to those who need to know. Reporting concerns is not a betrayal of trust.
- Write down as soon as you can and no later than 24 hours what you have been told, using the exact words if possible.
- Record in writing what was said using the child's own words as soon as possible. The following information should be included:
    - Dates and times
    - Any names mentioned
    - To whom the information was given
    - Information that is fact, hearsay or opinion should be noted as such
    - Ensure the record is signed and dated.

If the child indicates that they does not wish others to be informed about the allegations, it is important to sensitively explain why you need to share the information.

Actions to avoid

- Dismissing the concern
- Panicking
- Allowing shock or distaste to show
- Probing for more information than is offered
- Promising to keep the disclosure secret

- Speculating or making assumptions
- Approaching the accused person (this may put a child at further risk and/or jeopardise a criminal investigation).
- Investigation of the disclosure
- Making negative comments about the accused person.

3.3 Reporting concerns

Regardless of how concerns may have arisen, the person who received the disclosure or witnessed an incident must ensure the information is reported. They must not allow personal opinions regarding the credibility of any individual, or the information they have received, to prevent them from making the referral. They should not worry that they may be mistaken as the responsibility to make the assessment of the concern rests with the statutory agencies.

In the event that abuse is suspected, the concern must be reported to Social Services and/or the Police without delay and in all cases, within 24 hours. The following action should be taken:

- Report your concerns to the Club Welfare Officer. If they are not available, report the matter to the Weightlifting Wales Lead Safeguarding Officer, or a senior person within the organisation.
- The Club Welfare Officer or senior person must refer the matter without delay to Social Services and/or the Police and inform the Weightlifting Wales Lead officer. The police need only be called where there is immediate risk to a young person. If it is believed that there is no immediate danger, the initial referral should be made to Social Services. Concerns that arise outside office hours should be made to the social services emergency duty service or to the police.
- The parent/carer will be informed at the earliest opportunity, unless this is inconsistent with the need to ensure the child's safety, but advice should be sought from Social Services as to what information should be provided to parents, by whom and when.
- If a child is at immediate risk and action needs to be taken urgently, a 999 call must be made to the Police.
- In the event that there is any uncertainty as to whether a referral is appropriate, the NGB Lead Officer, NSPCC helpline or Social Services will be able to offer advice on what action to take.

In the case of non-recent abuse, disclosures must still be reported to the NGB Lead Safeguarding Officer, the Social Services and Police, as above, as the perpetrator may continue to present a risk to other children.

3.4 Recording information

Although urgent referrals should not be delayed, Social Services or Police referrals should be confirmed in writing within two working days and a copy should also be provided to the NGB. The report can be made using the NGB Welfare reporting form and should contain the following information:

- Personal details of the child concerned including full name, age or date of birth, gender, ethnicity and address.
- Details of parent/carer and an indication of what, if any, information has been shared.
- The nature of the concerns;
- How and why those concerns have arisen;
- Description of any visible injuries including bruising;
- Any observed changes in child's behaviour, relationships, etc
- Detailed description of any account of how any injuries occurred.
- Any times and dates or other relevant information;
- A clear distinction between what is fact, hearsay or opinion;
- Full details of the person about whom the concern/allegation is made including full name, date of birth, address, relationship the child concerned and/or position held in the club, if any;
- Any information you have on the child's developmental needs;
- Information about the person making the referral, including contact details, role and relationship to the child.

The contact details of the social services duty officer or police officer to whom the concerns were passed, together with the time and date of the call, and any agreed action to be taken should be recorded.

3.5 Concerns within the Sport

Concerns that relate to Weightlifting Wales staff, members or volunteers will be taken very seriously. Where there is a suspicion that a child has been abused by someone within the organisation, in addition to the above procedures, the individual may, in

consultation with the statutory agencies, be placed under suspension pending the outcome of Social Services and/or Police enquiries.

In these cases, there may be three types of investigation:

- Criminal - conducted by the police
- Child protection - carried out under section 47 (1) of the Children Act 1989 by social services and police
- NGB disciplinary - conducted by the organisation on conclusion of statutory agency investigations

Weightlifting Wales will:

- Consider whether the subject has access to children elsewhere and if so who needs to be informed. Working Together 2018 allows the sharing of potentially confidential information in such circumstances.
- Work closely with social services and police and attend strategy meetings as required.
- Provide appropriate support to children, parents, and members who are affected by an abuse situation including, where appropriate, the alleged perpetrator.
- Follow up any external investigation with an internal action if required
  Irrespective of the findings of a Police/Social Services investigation, Weightlifting Wales and/or (if appropriate) British Weightlifting will conduct an investigation to determine what, if any action is required to ensure children are safeguarded within the sport. Where disciplinary action is deemed appropriate, the civil standard of proof of the 'balance of probability' will be applied. Thus, the decision will rest on whether it is more likely than not that the allegation is true.
- Refer to the Disclosure Barring Service anyone who has been excluded from the sport (or would or might have been excluded if the individual had not otherwise ceased involvement in the sport) on the grounds that there are concerns that harm or risk has occurred, or an attempt was made one or incited another to harm a child or adult at risk,
- Review cases and ensure any preventive measures within the sport are addressed.
- Where appropriate WW will make a public statement to its members communicating the conclusion of an investigation whereby:
  - Criminal proceedings have taken place and the accused is found guilty of abuse or intent to harm and/or:

- The WW Case Management Group has proceeded with its own investigations and in the balance of probability, concluded that there is cause for concern about an individual in relation to safeguarding and imposes its own sanctions, that are proportionate to the level of risk they deem present.

3.6 Confidentiality and information sharing

Sharing information is a critical element of safeguarding and protecting children. Consent should normally be sought from the subject/s of the information in order for it to be shared, but, in the interests of child protection, it may be necessary for information to be shared with relevant staff and volunteers within Weightlifting Wales, Social Services, the Police without consent if there is reason to believe that seeking consent could place a child at risk of significant harm.

Weightlifting Wales will only share confidential information without consent where there is a reasonable belief that failure to disclose would place the child or others at increased risk of significant harm and/or would undermine the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime.

All staff, members and volunteers are expected to ensure that information relating to a child protection concern is passed to the appropriate person within Weightlifting Wales or club to enable appropriate action to be taken. It is essential that only those who need to know are informed.

The decision to share will be taken by the Lead Safeguarding Officer, in consultation with a senior official and/or deputy welfare officer, providing that this will not delay the referral. Confidential information will only be passed to agencies that require access for safeguarding purposes on a 'need to know' basis. A record will be maintained of the reason for the disclosure, to whom it was shared and the details that were provided.

Further information on sharing information and confidentiality can be found in Chapter 14 of Safeguarding Children: Working Together 2018.

3.7 Whistleblowing

Safeguarding children and young people requires everyone to be committed to the highest possible standards of openness, integrity and accountability. Weightlifting Wales supports an environment where staff and volunteers, members and their parents/carers and the public are encouraged to raise safeguarding and child protection concerns. Anyone who reports a legitimate concern to the organisation will be supported and all concerns will be taken seriously.

It is acknowledged that individuals are often very reluctant to report concerns through fear of negative reprisal. Weightlifting Wales will take action against anyone who has harassed or victimised a whistle-blower. The identity of individuals who wish to remain anonymous will not be disclosed without first taking time to explain the circumstances in which disclosure may be desirable.

In the first instance, poor practice concerns that relate to a club should be referred to the Club Welfare Officer or senior official, except where:

- The whistle-blower believes there would be a risk of victimisation, either to the whistle-blower or child/children, if the matter was raised internally within the club; or
- The whistle-blower has already raised the matter internally and the matter was covered up or no action was taken and the situation remains unchanged.

3.8 Media interest

Incidents of child abuse can generate significant media interest. Anyone who is approached by the media should refrain from providing any information and should follow the following guidance:

- Take a note of the journalist's name and contact details and whom they represent;
- Establish exactly what information the journalist requires;
- Establish whether the journalist is working to any deadlines and inform them that the matter will be referred to Weightlifting Wales to discuss a response;
- Inform the appropriate Club Welfare Officer or person in charge who must refer the matter to the Weightlifting Wales Safeguarding Lead Officer who will assist in formulating an appropriate response in consultation with senior officials.
- A copy of the response will be sent to the journalist and other relevant individuals.

3.9 Support services

Both the victim of abuse and anyone who is investigated for allegations of abuse may benefit from information about support services. It is also useful to provide this information for anyone else who has been affected by an incident of abuse, including family members, those involved in responding to the incident, and sometimes other children, parents or club members.

Anyone who has made a disclosure of abuse, has been the subject of an allegation, or has been indirectly affected by an incident will be offered information on support services. Anyone within the organisation who is the subject of an abuse allegation will also be provided with contact details for support services they may require.

4 SAFE RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

4.1 Introduction

Although the vast majority of people seeking to work or volunteer with children do not present a risk to children, it is accepted that some individuals have inappropriate motives in seeking this type of work. Safe recruitment and selection procedures should help to deter or prevent inappropriate individuals from gaining positions as well as clarifying the club's commitment to safeguarding high standards of behaviour.

Weightlifting Wales is committed to applying a robust recruitment and selection process and recruit individuals who share the Weightlifting Wales' values and approach to safeguarding. All Weightlifting Wales registered clubs should make sure that they also adopt these processes. These procedures should apply to both paid and voluntary positions, even where there is only one applicant for a position.

These procedures are not applicable in the following cases:

- Parents/carers whose only role is to care for their own child
- One-off volunteers who only have contact for a short period, e.g. young people on work experience, helpers at fundraising events, and are always supervised by appropriately recruited and vetted individuals.

In positions where a Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) check has been deemed by the organisation to be required, these must be repeated at regular intervals of no more than three years throughout the period of employment (paid posts) or deployment (volunteers).

Weightlifting Wales recognises the importance of robust recruitment and selection practices and will ensure all safeguarding issues are considered throughout the process. The following procedures will be applied for all roles working with children:

4.2 Planning

All positions should have a job/role description that describes the range of duties the role will involve, and a person specification that describes the required attributes. The person specification should be divided into 'essential attributes' which describe what each candidate must be able to demonstrate immediately and 'desirable attributes' that describe qualities that would enable a candidate to perform the duties better and, if not currently possessed, may be gained in time. All person specifications for roles

working with children should include suitability to work with children as an 'essential' criterion.

Any advertising and information sent to potential applicants should make specific reference to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and highlight that the post involves working with children and will therefore require the completion of a DBS check.

4.3 Pre interview

All applicants should be required to complete the NGB standard application form which requires the applicant to supply the following information:

- Current and any former names, address and other contact details;
- National Insurance number to confirm the right to work;
- Information on relevant academic or vocational qualifications and details of the awarding body;
- Membership details of NGB;
- A full history of any paid or voluntary positions working with children, with start and end dates and reasons for leaving;
- A statement of the personal qualities and experience that demonstrate the applicant's suitability for the position and how they fulfils the person specification;
- Contact details of at least two referees, one of whom should be a previous employer or club. The application form should indicate that references will be sought for short-listed candidates prior to the interview, unless the applicant has a justifiable reason for not seeking references in advance;
- applicants must also indicate by way of completing a self-declaration form whether they have had any involvement in a Police/Children's Social Care Services enquiry involving children under the age of eighteen or they have been subject to any disciplinary sanctions by any other sports governing regulatory body or alternative, or previous employer.

All applicants should be assessed against the criteria contained in the person specification and a short list prepared. Any concerns and unexplained gaps from the application forms should be noted and addressed with the applicant at interview.

Clubs should contact the NGB to ask that they provide any relevant information regarding the applicant's suitability to work with children and to confirm coaching qualifications, if appropriate.

A minimum of two written references, including one from their most recent role that specifically address suitability to work with children should be requested for all candidates preferably in advance of interview.

4.4 Interview

All potential staff or volunteers should be interviewed or be asked to attend a meeting with a minimum of two representatives of the club prior to any position being confirmed. They should be asked to bring evidence to verify their identity and confirm the right to work in the UK and proof of any relevant qualifications.

The interview process and questions should be agreed in advance, and should take account of the interview's two main functions:

a) to explore the applicant's qualities in relation to the requirements of the job, and
b) to assess an applicant's suitability to work with children.

The interview should explore any gaps and inconsistencies in the application form, and assess suitability to work with children by examining the applicant's commitment to safeguarding by asking questions that probe the applicant's underlying attitudes and behaviours relating to working with children.

4.5 Pre recruitment checks

Eligible candidates will be asked to complete a Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) check prior to commencing any aspect of their role that involves contact with children. Weightlifting Wales will determine which roles are eligible for DBS checks, and whether these roles are considered to be in *Regulated Activity*.

Regulated Activity is defined as, work which an individual who is barred from working with vulnerable groups including children must not do.

In summary this includes:

- Unsupervised activities: teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children, or providing advice/ guidance on well-being, or driving a vehicle only for children.
- Work being carried out regularly (at least weekly), frequently (four times a month or more) or overnight (between 2am and 6am) c) or work in a limited range of establishments ('specified places'), with opportunity for contact: e.g. schools, children's homes, and childcare premises.

It is an offence for a barred person to seek to work in regulated activity, and for an employer knowingly to employ a barred person in regulated activity. The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 legally requires employers to have established whether an individual is barred before placing them in regulated activity.

Full guidance in relation DBS checks and eligibility criteria can be found in Defining 'Supervision' and Regulated Activity Sport and Recreation Sector Guidance or via the Home Office

Where the candidate has been resident in a foreign country, it is unlikely that a DBS check will suffice. WW should seek to access information from the relevant country of origin/residence.

All appointments should be confirmed by the relevant Executive Committee on confirmation that the individual has shown their DBS check to the relevant safeguarding lead and a decision has been made on their suitability to undertake the role.

4.6 Induction

All new staff and volunteers should:

- Complete an induction process to familiarise them with the organisation's policies and procedures and the responsibilities of the post, including safeguarding.
- Be required to sign up to the organisation's constitution, rules, guidelines, codes of conduct, regulations and policies
- Register as a member of the NGB (if required)
- Attend a recognised safeguarding awareness course as soon as possible and no later than six months after taking up their post.
- Complete a probationary/trial period (usually 6 months)

4.7 Monitoring and appraisal

At regular intervals all new and existing staff and volunteers should be given the opportunity to receive and provide feedback relating to their role. All new staff and volunteers should have access to support from a mentor and receive a formal appraisal at the end of their probation period. After this period, appraisal should be provided at regular intervals and a formal appraisal covering safeguard practice completed annually.

5 PRACTICE GUIDANCE

5.1 Supervision ratios

It is essential that appropriate ratios for supervision are adopted and everyone is clear of their supervisory responsibilities. Ratios of adults to children should be determined by considering age, the nature of the activity and where it is taking place.

For club training, Weightlifting Wales would expect a minimum ratio of two responsible adults, one of whom should be suitably qualified with a valid BWL coach license in place.

- Two adults to fifteen children aged over 13 years old;
- Two adults to ten children aged 9 – 12 years old.

At events, or when travelling with a group, on all occasions, there must always be a minimum of two responsible adults present. This ensures there is supervision in the event of an accident or incident that requires one of the adults to leave the group to accompany a child. For a group with boys and girls, there should be at least one male and one female member of staff or responsible person present with the group.

5.2 Changing facilities

The use of changing facilities can be difficult to regulate where training venues are open to the public and may be mixed gender. All Weightlifting Wales clubs should develop a policy that fits with the specific circumstances in which they operate. The following principles should be adopted:

- Where a club is fully responsible for changing facilities, adults should not be permitted to get changed in these facilities at the same time as children;
- Parents should only be in the changing room to assist their child if the age group using the facilities are under-8 years old. Additional arrangements may be required if there are young people with disabilities in the group;
- There must be separate changing facilities or changing times for males and female;
- No-one should enter changing rooms whilst these are being used by members of the opposite sex;
- The use of photographic devices, including mobile phone cameras must not be permitted in changing facilities;
- Codes of conduct should cover behaviour whilst using changing facilities;

- Children should be aware that incidents in the changing facilities should be reported without delay.
- Clubs that are unable to provide safe changing room facilities must ensure participants arrive wearing their training clothes

Weightlifting Wales considers it to be good practice to ensure that children are supervised by staff/volunteers of the same gender while changing.

5.3 Weigh-ins

In Weightlifting Wales competitions, without exception, all under 18's must weigh-in in the clothes that they will compete in during the competition. (Footwear or training aids such as knee wraps, belt, wrist wraps etc. not included).

The following principles should be applied:

- There must always be a minimum of two officials present in the weigh-in room
- WW recommends all u18's are accompanied by an adult chaperone of the same gender. It is the responsibility of the parent or coach to ensure a chaperone is in place
- Where under 18's are not accompanied by a chaperone, they may be weighed in as small groups
- Nobody of the opposite gender should be present in the area where the weigh-in is carried out
- Photographic devices are not permitted for use in the weigh-in room under any circumstances
- Anyone who is not permitted to be in the weigh-in room should not enter the room during the process of the weigh-in
- A deduction of .250g will be applied for u18 athletes weighing over their nominated body weight category

5.4 Codes of Conduct

It is important that everyone within the sport is clear about what is considered acceptable conduct when working with children. All staff, members and volunteers must promote good practice and ensure poor practice is challenged. Adhering to the following code of good practice will also help avoid positions where both the responsible adult and the child are vulnerable and create a positive environment within the sport:

- Always work in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open and transparent communication).
- Always ensure that there is at least one other responsible adult present during training sessions.
- Treat all children fairly, and with respect and dignity.
- Always put the welfare of each child first, before winning or achieving goals.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries in relationships with children, and do not engage in sexual or romantic relationships with young people (aged 16 and 17 years) where you are in a position of trust in relation to them as outlined in Person In Position of Trust legislation published in 2022.
- Build balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children to share in the decision-making process.
- Make sport fun, enjoyable and promote fair play.
- Ensure that if any form of manual/physical support is required, it is provided openly and according to coach education guidelines. Care is needed, as it can be difficult to maintain appropriate hand positions when a child is moving. Young people and their parents should always be consulted and their agreement gained.
- Keep up to date with technical skills, qualifications and insurance in sport.
- Ensure parents/carers understand what is expected of them e.g. that they accept responsibility for transporting their child to and from the sport activity, and for bringing and collecting their child on time.
- Request written parental consent if club officials wish to organise group transport to an event.
- Always ensure parents, teachers, coaches or officials work in pairs if supervising young people, particularly in changing areas
- Ensure that if teams are taken away, they are always accompanied by at least one adult of the same gender. Mixed teams should have both male and female supervision.
- Ensure that at competitions or residential events, adults should not enter children's rooms or invite children into their rooms.
- Be a positive role model - this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people.
- Give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Recognise the developmental needs and capacity of young people, avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will.

- Secure parental consent in writing to act *in loco parentis*, if the need arises to administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment.
- Keep a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.

5.5 Responding to Bullying

All forms of bullying are unacceptable and will not be tolerated. It is important to ensure children are adequately supervised at all times, to help identify and take action to address any early signs of bullying. The provision of an open environment where children are encouraged to report any bullying concerns is vital in tackling bullying. The following action should be taken should any incident of bullying occur:

- Offer the bullied person reassurance and try to gain their trust;
- Explain that someone in authority needs to be informed about the bullying;
- Report suspicions or concerns to the person in charge or the club welfare officer if they are present;
- Separately, talk to the bully/bullies and try to get them to understand the consequences of their actions;
- Ask the bully/bullies to apologise to the victim, if appropriate.
- Inform the parents of both the bullied and bullying children;
- Insist that any items taken from the bullied person are returned;
- Impose sanctions or disciplinary action if necessary;
- Encourage the bully/bullies to change his/her behaviour;
- Keep accurate records of what happened together with names of those involved and any action taken.

Children who have been bullied will often benefit from ongoing support to deal with the impact of bullying. As well as support from the welfare officer, victims of bullying can benefit from peer support. It is important that parents/carers are involved as they are likely to be a key source of support. The club may consider holding a reconciliation meeting to help address the issues between the bully and the bullied young person. There are also a number of charities that can provide support to children who experience bullying e.g. Childline or Anti-Bullying Alliance.

5.6 Photography and use of imagery

Weightlifting Wales believes it is important that parents/carers are able to celebrate the achievements of their children through photographs/film. In addition, WW recognises that promoting images of the sport will help encourage increased participation. However, Weightlifting Wales acknowledges that there are risks to

children associated with the use of photographs on sports websites and other publications.

Photographs can be used as a means of identifying children when they are accompanied with personal information. This information can make a child vulnerable to an individual who may wish to "groom" the child for abuse. In addition, the content of the photo can be used or adapted for inappropriate use. There is evidence of this adapted material finding its way onto sites showing child abuse images.

Weightlifting Wales does not advocate the banning of photography but recognises the importance of putting in place appropriate and proportionate safeguards to ensure a safe sporting environment for children and young people and allow children (and their parents/carers on their behalf) the right to decide whether their photograph is taken, and how the images may be used.

Photography at events

Weightlifting Wales permits spectators and accredited professional photographers to take photographs at Weightlifting events, but requires those organising such events to regulate the taking of photographs and apply, as a minimum, the following safeguards:

- Children and parents/carers should be informed that photography will be permitted at an event and if professional photographers will be present.
- If the media or professional photographers are present at the event, the event organiser is responsible for making sure children and their parents/carers are fully informed why photographs are being taken, where and how they will be published and for obtaining the necessary consents, all parents/carers are given the opportunity to request that photos are not taken of their child during the event.
- Spectators wishing to take photographs will be required to register with the event organiser the intention to use photographic and video equipment (including mobile phones with cameras) and must acknowledge that the images are for private use and not for publication.
- Professional photographers/filming/video operators wishing to cover an event will need to apply for accreditation by the event organiser at least *4 weeks* before the event, unless otherwise agreed. The accreditation process will require proof of professional identification details, which should be verified with the issuing authority prior to the event.
- Anyone who is registered to take photographs will be issued with a photography pass, which they will be required to display at all times during the event.
- A public announcement will be made, prior to the start of the event, outlining the specific details concerning photographic/filming equipment registration.

This will also be published prominently in event programmes. The recommended wording is: **'**In line with the recommendation in the Weightlifting Wales Policy, the organisers of this event request that any person wishing to engage in any video or photography should register their details with staff at the spectator desk before carrying out any such photography.

- The promoter reserves the right to decline entry to any person unable to meet or abide by the organiser's conditions. If you are concerned about any photography taking place at this event, please contact the promoter or event organiser who will be pleased to discuss this matter with you'.
- Anyone registered/accredited to take photographs will be provided with clear guidance on what is considered acceptable in terms of the appropriate imagery and conduct and any areas where photography is forbidden (e.g. changing rooms, toilet areas).
- Unsupervised access to children, one to one photo sessions at events or photo sessions outside the events or at a child's home will not be permitted.
- Any concerns regarding the inappropriate or intrusive use of photographic equipment should be reported to the event organiser or event welfare officer immediately.
- Parents to give consent prior to a competition during the entry process for their child to be photographed and for these photos to potentially be used for the advertisement of upcoming Weightlifting Wales events and promotion of the sport. Parents may also deny or remove consent during the entry process or afterwards by contacting the Safeguarding Officer.

Filming for coaching purposes

There is no intention to prevent club coaches and teachers from using videoing as a legitimate coaching aid, however, it is important to ensure the welfare of children being filmed. The child and their parent/carer must be made aware of the purpose of the filming as a coaching aid and consent obtained. As the filming is not being conducted for publication, it is acceptable to introduce a blanket consent form as part of the process applied when a child joins the club. It is important that appropriate care is taken to securely store the footage to avoid inappropriate usage.

Publication of images

The following guidance should be applied when seeking to publish images:

- Prior to taking photographs or filming a child, the child (or their parent/carer) should be informed of the purpose and where the images will be published e.g. in print or on a website;
- The child (or their parent/carer) should be asked to provide their written consent for their images to be taken and published;

- Images of children should not be accompanied by identifying personal details. This includes first name and surname, address etc. This reduces the risk of inappropriate, unsolicited attention from people within and outside the sport. If it is important to name a child, their image should not be used.
- Only images of children in appropriate sporting attire should be used to reduce the risk of the image being adapted for inappropriate use.
- Sporting action shots should focus on the activity rather than a particular child and should avoid full face and body shots.
- Website managers should carefully monitor content and ensure any inappropriate images or improper text is removed.

Weightlifting Wales should be informed of any inappropriate use of imagery on websites or any other form of media, which is not in keeping with this guidance. Anyone discovering a child's image that may be illegal should follow Weightlifting Wales reporting procedures and ensure the Weightlifting Wales Lead Safeguarding Officer and Children's Social Care and/or Police are informed.

5.7 Transport

Although it is always best safeguarding practice to avoid transporting a child alone, Weightlifting Wales recognises that there are some circumstances where it is unavoidable if a child is to participate in the required training and competition. If all alternatives have been exhausted and a coach or official has to transport a child there are a number of safety measures that should be put in place to minimise the risk:

- Individuals providing transport to children on behalf of the WW or a registered club may be required to complete a DBS check and provide evidences of appropriate insurance;
- Ensure the Club Welfare Officer has been made aware of the transport arrangements and is given the opportunity to talk to the child/children in advance to check they are comfortable with the plans. The Club Welfare Officer should ensure that the children understand their rights and feel able to discuss any concerns or incidents;
- Gain signed consent from the parents / carers of the children travelling
- Try to avoid having one child alone with the driver, either by having another adult present or by ensuring children are transported in groups with central pick-up and drop-off points. If the later recommendation is not possible, and the transport arrangements are in place on a routine basis, try to alternate which child is dropped off last;

- Provide parents with full details of any planned breaks in the journey and departure and arrival times;
- Sit children in the back of the car;
- Always use seat belts and booster seats, if required. Requirements should be confirmed prior to the trip.
- Ensure the driver has a point of contact and mobile phone should they break down.

It is accepted that circumstances may arise in event of an emergency, e.g. a child sustains an injury and needs to go to hospital, where an unaccompanied adult may need to transport an unaccompanied child. In such situations, the club welfare officer or senior official and, where possible, the child's parents should be informed.

5.8 Physical Contact

The use of physical contact in Weightlifting is important to support the development of skills and techniques, to treat injury or prevent an injury or accident from occurring. Physical contact during participation in weightlifting should always be intended to meet the child's needs, NOT the adult's. It is important to be open and transparent about physical contact as it is possible that legitimate contact between an adult and a child may be misconstrued or misunderstood both by the child and observers.

The following guidance should be applied in respect of any physical contact with children:

- Ensure, in situations where physical contact is necessary to assist with learning, the adult explains to the child the nature and reason for the physical contact, and unless the contact arises in an emergency and to prevent harm, ask the child for permission;

- Avoid over handling when assisting a child;

- Ensure any physical contact takes place in an open or public environment and does not take place in secret or out of sight of others;

- Avoid any gratuitous or unnecessary physical contact with children and young people;

- Include guidance on physical contact as part of an induction process or pack for new participants;

- Ensure children with disabilities who need to be lifted or manually supported are treated with dignity and respect. Relevant health and safety guidelines must be followed to ensure the safety of the child and those assisting. It is recommended that those assisting receive appropriate training;

- Ensure that any sport science or medical practices or other roles where physical contact is commonplace and/or a requirement of the role is only carried out by trained or qualified practitioners;

- Contact should not involve touching genital areas, buttocks, breasts or any other part of the body that might cause a child distress or embarrassment;

- Any form of physical punishment of children is unlawful, as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour unless it is by way of physical intervention to prevent a young person from harming themselves or others or damaging property;

- Encourage children to voice concerns in the event that any physical contact makes them feel uncomfortable or threatened.

5.9 Late collection of children

Late collection of children by parents/carers can be challenging for sports officials to manage. One way of addressing this issue is to stress the need for parent/carers to ensure they arrive on time at the end of a session. However, it is appreciated that there are some circumstances beyond the control of the parent/carer that may make it impossible to collect their child on time. Whilst it is not the responsibility of coaches and officials to transport children home on behalf of parents/carers who have been delayed, clubs should adopt the following measures to ensure children are safeguarded:

- Ask parents to provide an emergency contact name and number.
- Provide parents/carers with a contact number for the club and an instruction to call if there is any likelihood of late collection.
- Attempt to contact the child's parent/carer or, if necessary, the emergency contact.

- Ensure that two adults remain with the child at the facility until the parents/carer

arrives.

- If appropriate, remind parents/carers of the policy relating to late collection.

The child should not be sent home with another person without permission from a parent/carer.

5.10 E-Safety

E-safety is vitally important in a climate where social media (Facebook, Twitter), IT (internet, gaming, and mobile phones (including calls, texting (SMS and MMS) and instant messaging) are commonly used by children, young people and adults at risk as a primary means of communication with their friends, as well as those who they have a more formal relationship with (e.g. coaches, officials, and other officers involved with the provision of sport). Weightlifting Wales therefore recognise that those individuals who are employed or deployed by Weightlifting Wales are in a position of trust and/or responsibility, and as such need to promote e-safety in the following ways:

- Appreciate that social media and IT are an essential part of our lives; enabling us to gather and store information, as well as communicate with each other. It can be greatly beneficial, but it can also be actually or potentially harmful if misused by an adult or young person
- Follow processes which ensure that as an organisation we operate in line with our values to keep children, young people and adults at risk safe, and within the law in terms of how we use social media and IT
- Work in partnership with the children, young people, parents, carers, to ensure the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk, and help them to be responsible and knowledgeable in their approach to e-safety.

Weightlifting Wales will seek to promote e-safety by:

- Identifying a Coaches Code of Conduct which provides clear and specific directions to staff and volunteers regarding appropriate e-communication using of social media and IT
- Identifying an Athlete Person Code of Conduct and Social Media Policy which provides clear and specific directions about appropriate e-communication using social media and IT
- Supporting parents/carers to keep children, young people and adults at risk safe online and when using their mobile phone or gaming console
- Developing Disciplinary Procedures which deal firmly, fairly and decisively with any misuse of social media or IT, or complaints/allegations relating to breaches of social media or IT agreements.

6. Appendices

Click to view policies below

- **Safeguarding/Child Protection Contacts**
  - **Weightlifting Wales Safeguarding Lead**
    Simon Roach – simon.roach@weightlifting.wales
  - **Weightlifting Wales Deputy Safeguarding Lead**
    Hannah Powell – hannah.powell@weightlifting.wales
  - **British Weight Lifting Safeguarding Lead**
    Sue Ward – sue.ward@britishweightlifting.org
  - **NSPCC Helpline - 0808 800 500 webpage**
  - **- https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/reporting-abuse/nspcc-helpline/**
  - **Emergency Services 999**
  - **Welsh County Contacts**
  - - https://weightlifting.wales/docs/uploads/Contacts-for-County-Safeguarding-Teams-in-Wales.pdf

- **Code of ethics**
- **Codes of conduct for parents**
- **Codes of conduct for young people**
- **Reporting procedures flowchart (in sport)**
- **Reporting procedure flowchart (outside sport)**
- **Incident report form**
- **Reference request form**
- **Self-disclosure form**
- **Role description Club Welfare Officer**

Role description Lead Safeguarding Officer

DBS Process

Disclosure & Barring Service

Welfare officers and all coaches must have an active Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, this establishes if the person is considered suitable to work with children and vulnerable adults.

The DBS process

DBS checks with are valid for two years from date of issue or the date of an online service update check by British Weight Lifting (BWL). All adults who wish to continue to work in a role which requires a DBS check must renew their application prior to its expiry after two years.
If an individual, working in a role which requires a DBS check, receives a conviction or a caution for any offence, they must notify British Weight Lifting and Weightlifting Wales (WW) within 28 days of the date of the conviction or caution. They will usually be required to complete a new DBS check.

How to apply for a DBS check

To apply for a British Weight Lifting DBS certificate, you must first apply for a Coach licence through your BWL account. BWL will then assess your application and if required, will set up a DBS application through online checking company. You will be required to 1) complete an online application and 2) submit ID documents to BWL for verification – the DBS will not be processed until both steps have been completed.

BWL accepts existing DBS checks provided they are 1) of an Enhanced level and 2) are registered on the online update service. You will be required to submit a copy of your DBS certificate to authorise BWL to check your existing DBS on the update service.

Referrals to the Safeguarding Case Management Group

If BWL or WW are notified of disclosures on an applicant's DBS check which require a risk assessment before clearance, the matter will be referred to a Safeguarding Case Management Group (SCMG) for determination by the SCMG.

However, the Lead Safeguarding Officer has the power to determine that disclosures on an applicant's DBS check do not require a risk assessment, by virtue of the fact that they are not sufficiently serious, and the individual can be cleared to continue in their role upon notification.

Where an applicant's DBS disclosures are referred to the SCMG, the applicant cannot commence or continue in a role requiring a DBS check until such time as a decision as to their suitability has been made.