

ASHURST WOOD YOUTH CLUB

Dealing with Allegations

The following procedures will apply in the identification or suspicion of abuse towards a young person.

Abuse

There are four types of abuse to which young people can be subjected: physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse and emotional abuse.

If any of these occur, young people often display problems in the following areas: behaviour drugs and alcohol education, physical evidence e.g. bruising, mental health relationships.

A young person may disclose that he is being abused; he may show signs of abuse; or he may speak about third party abuse.

If abuse is suspected:

- Observations, conversations or concerns will be recorded, signed and dated.
- The matter must not be investigated or discussed with anyone other than the Safeguarding Officer or Club Leader.
- The Chairperson of the Management Committee/Club Leader/Safeguarding Officer will assess the information and, within 48 hours, contact the appropriate local statutory services, if necessary.

If abuse is reported/alleged:

- The young person will be listened to and encouraged to speak without interruption, comment or judgment.
- It will be explained that in terms of the club's Confidentiality Policy, information may need to be shared in certain circumstances.
- A written account of the report or allegation will be made, signed and dated and the information passed to the Safeguarding Officer or Club Leader.
- The Chairperson of the Management Committee/Club Leader/Safeguarding Officer will assess the information and, within 48 hours, contact the appropriate statutory services, if necessary.
- If the matter is regarded as a critical it should be referred immediately and directly to the County Safeguarding Officer and details of the referral passed to the Club Safeguarding Officer/Club Leader as soon as possible.

Protecting Leaders and volunteer

The Management Committee recognises the importance of protecting its leaders from possible allegations of abuse and recommends the following guidelines:

Leaders and volunteers should not:

- Be alone with young people
- Lock and unlock premises without another adult present
- Transport young people in a car or mini bus without another adult being present
- Take young people to their homes
- Make inappropriate contact with young people i.e. develop relationships outside the club setting
- Leave young people unattended
- Leave young people in the presence of adults who are not suitably trained
- Leave young people in the presence of adults not known to leaders
- Leave young people in the presence of adults who have not had relevant DBS checks
- Show favouritism to young people within the club

Allegations about Leaders and volunteer helpers

If any allegation is made or suspicions emerge regarding any volunteer leader of the club, these should be reported to the Safeguarding Officer and Club Leader. If an allegation concerns either of these officers, the report should be made to the Club Chairperson.

If further action is required, the following procedure will apply during which all information relating to the allegation will remain confidential:

- A detailed factual record of the allegation and action taken will be made
- Information will be passed to the Club Chairperson
- Consideration will be given to the suspension of the person involved taking account of the risks to other young people and the leader concerned
- If the allegation involves a club member, contact will be made with the young person's parents to advise them of the process
- Relevant external bodies will be advised

Procedure with cases of Alleged Abuse

Step 1: Record concerns, sign and date

Step 2: Discuss immediately with Safeguarding Officer or Club Leader who will decide whether referral is necessary

If critical, refer immediately to the statutory services or appropriate authorities.

Record referral details and pass to Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible

Step 3: Chairperson, Safeguarding Officer, Club Leader to assess information. If necessary within 48 hours contact statutory services or appropriate authorities

Emergency Contact details

Chairperson

Safeguarding Officer

Club Leader