



# **GHK Ladies Hockey Club**

## **Child Protection Policy**

This Policy has been created by GHK Ladies Hockey Club and amended to be a suitable policy for GHK Ladies Hockey Club. This document will be maintained and reviewed by the Child Protection & Welfare Officer and members of the Club Committee.

Updated April 2024

# **I. CHILD WELLBEING AND PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

## **I.1 CHILD WELLBEING AND PROTECTION POLICY**

GHK Ladies Hockey Club is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children in its care. It recognises the responsibility to promote safe practice and to protect children from harm, abuse and exploitation. Staff and volunteers will work together to embrace difference, diversity and respect the rights of children and young people.

For the purposes of this policy and these procedures the term participant includes anyone who is involved with the activities of GHK Ladies Hockey Club whether as a member, player, coach, umpire, official or in any other voluntary capacity.

These guidelines are based on the following principles:

- The welfare of children is the primary concern.
- All children, whatever their gender, race, colour, nationality, disability, age, religious or political belief, sexual orientation, social background, marital status, culture, HIV status or pregnancy have the right to protection from all forms of harm and abuse.
- Child protection is everyone's responsibility.
- Children have the right to express views on all matters which affect them, should they wish to do so.
- Organisations shall work in partnership together with children and parents to promote the welfare, health and development of children.

GHK Ladies Hockey Club will:

- Promote the health and welfare of children by providing opportunities for them to take part in Hockey safely.
- Respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of children.
- Promote and implement appropriate procedures to safeguard the wellbeing of children and protect them from abuse.
- Recruit, train, support and supervise its staff, members and volunteers to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect children from abuse and to reduce risk to themselves.

- Require staff, members and volunteers to adopt and abide by this Child Protection Policy and these procedures.
- Respond to any allegations of misconduct or abuse of children in line with this Policy and these procedures as well as implementing, where appropriate, the relevant disciplinary and appeals procedures.
- Observe guidelines issued by local Child Protection Committees for the protection of children.
- Regularly monitor and evaluate the implementation of this Policy and these procedures.

### **1.1.1 Review**

This Policy and these Procedures will be regularly reviewed:

- In accordance with changes in legislation and guidance on the protection of children or following any changes within GHK Ladies Hockey Club.
- Following any issues or concerns raised about the protection of children within GHK Ladies Hockey Club. In all other circumstances, at least every three years.

## **I.2 WHAT ARE WE PROTECTING CHILDREN AGAINST?**

The following examples are ways in which children may be abused or harmed, either within or out with sport.

### **I.2.1 Child Abuse**

In Scotland child abuse is defined as follows:

‘Children may be in need of protection where their basic needs are not being met, in a manner appropriate to their age and stage of development, and they will be at risk through avoidable acts of commission or omission on the part of their parent(s), sibling(s) or other relative(s), or a carer (i.e. the person while not a parent who has actual custody of the child).’\*

This definition includes placing children at risk through something a person has done to them or something a person is failing to do for them. For those working in the field of child care and protection the definition gets broken down further into categories of abuse, namely;

- (i) Emotional Abuse
- (ii) Physical Injury
- (iii) Physical Neglect
- (iv) Sexual Abuse
- (v) Non-organic failure to thrive\*\*

These categories are not mutually exclusive, for example, a child experiencing physical abuse is undoubtedly experiencing emotional abuse as well.

\*\* Children who significantly fail to reach normal growth and developmental milestones where physical and genetic reasons have been medically eliminated and a diagnosis of non-organic failure to thrive has been established.

### **1.2.2 Identifying Child Abuse**

Although the physical and behavioural signs listed may be symptomatic of abuse, they may not always be an indicator and, conversely, children experiencing abuse may not demonstrate any of these signs.

Child abuse is often difficult to recognise. It is not the responsibility of anyone involved in sport to decide whether or not a child has been abused. This is the role of trained professionals. We all have, however, a duty to act on any concerns about abuse.

For further details of types of abuse, examples of abuse and indicators of abuse please see the section “WHAT ARE WE PROTECTING CHILDREN AGAINST?” in the appendices.

\*Protecting Children- A Shared Responsibility. A Guidance on Interagency Co-operation (The Scottish Office, 1998).

## **I.3 THE ROLE OF GHK LADIES HOCKEY CLUB IN PROTECTING CHILDREN**

### **I.3.1 Why Protecting Children Is Important**

There are many reasons why GHK Ladies Hockey Club needs to address, plan and implement the protection of children and young people. It:

- Will help to ensure GHK Ladies Hockey Club fulfil legal and moral obligations for the care and protection of children.
- Sends a positive message to both children and parents about the value GHK Ladies Hockey Club places on children and their participation in Hockey.
- Sends a positive message to staff and volunteers that you will support and guide them when they work with children and you will put safeguards in place to minimise risk to all.
- Sets the standards and expectations for everyone working in Hockey and provides a benchmark against which practice can be measured and challenged.
- Build a legacy for the future of Hockey.
- Reduce the risk of successful legal action against GHK Ladies Hockey Club by ensuring that all legal duties have been fulfilled and that all reasonable steps have been taken to safeguard and promote the health, welfare and development of children.

These recommendations are based on legislation, national guidance and messages from inquiries and recognised good practice.

## **I.4: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN CHILD PROTECTION**

GHK Ladies Hockey Club will:

- Ensure there are policies, procedures, systems, structures, resources and personnel in place to promote the welfare and protection of children taking part in Hockey.
- Actively work jointly with parents and other agencies through joint planning, training and monitoring of their arrangements for the protection of children.
- Ensure there are quality assurance mechanisms in place to monitor, review and evaluate arrangements for the protection of children.

The Child Protection and Welfare Officer for GHK Ladies Hockey Club will:

- Be supported by Scottish Hockey and GHK Ladies Hockey Club and be appropriately trained.
- Implement and promote Scottish Hockey and GHK Ladies Hockey Club Child Protection Policies and Procedures.
- Lead on the effective implementation of policy and procedures throughout the sport.
- Regularly report to the Technical Committee and then to the Management committee and Board of Directors.
- Act as the main contact within GHK Ladies Hockey Club for the protection of children.
- Provide information and advice on the protection of children within the boundaries of the remit.
- Support and raise awareness of the protection of children.
- Communicate with members on issues of child protection.
- Keep abreast of developments and understand the latest information on data protection, confidentiality and other legal issues that impact on the protection of children.
- Encourage good practice and support of procedures to protect children.
- Establish and maintain contact with local statutory agencies including the police and social work services.
- Maintain confidential records of reported cases, action taken, liaise with the statutory agencies and ensure they have access to all necessary information.
- Organise training for members.

- Regularly monitor and review GHK Ladies Hockey Club's Child Protection Policy and Procedures.
- Ensure there are mechanisms in place for quality assurance

Within GHK Ladies Hockey Club, the Club Child Protection and Welfare Officer will:

- Be supported by Scottish Hockey and the Club and be appropriately trained.
- Implement and promote appropriate the GHK Ladies Hockey Club Child Protection Policy and Procedures.
- Regularly report to the Club Committee.
- Act as the main contact within the Club for the protection of children.
- Encourage good practice and support of procedures to protect children.
- Keep abreast of developments and understand the latest information on data protection, confidentiality and other legal issues that impact on the protection of children.
- Communicate with Scottish Hockey's Child Protection and Welfare Officer.
- Maintain confidential records of reported cases, action taken, liaise with the statutory agencies and ensure they have access to all necessary information.
- Report cases, concerns and action taken to Scottish Hockey Child Protection and Welfare Officer
- Attend training on the protection of children and organise appropriate training for other members.
- Establish and maintain contact with local statutory agencies including the police and social work services.
- Monitor and review the Child Protection Policy and procedures for their club.
- Ensure there are mechanisms in place for quality assurance.



## **I.5 PROCEDURES FOR IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY**

### **I.5.1 Recruitment and Selection of Staff and Volunteers to Regulated Work Positions**

GHK Ladies Hockey Club will take all reasonable steps must be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from undertaking regulated work, be it paid or volunteering, with children. Further, we have a legal duty to ensure that individuals who are barred from regulated work with children are not engaged (either paid or unpaid) in regulated work within GHK Ladies Hockey Club.

#### **REGULATED WORK**

How to assess if someone is doing regulated work:

1. Is it work? It has to be work, (paid or unpaid) i.e. not simply an arrangement between friends/family.
2. Who are they working with? It has to be with children under the age of 18 years.
3. What do they do? The work has to include:
  - caring for children
  - teaching, instructing, training or supervising children
  - being in sole charge of children
  - having unsupervised access to children
  - being a host parent.
4. Is it their normal duties? It has to be part of normal duties i.e. the activity is reasonably anticipated and could appear in the job description.
5. Are there any exceptions? Where the presence of children in the activity is 'incidental' (e.g. the activity is targeted at adults but has a couple of U18s attending).

For further assistance, to decide if a post is 'regulated' we recommend you refer to the Scottish Hockey Child Protection and Welfare Officer.

This recruitment and selection procedure has two functions. It:

- 1) Provides GHK Ladies Hockey Club with an opportunity to assess the suitability of the individual for a particular regulated work role.

2) Provides the prospective employee or volunteer with an opportunity to assess the organisation and the opportunities available.

The following recommended procedure should be completed for all positions deemed to be regulated work in the organisation.

### **1.5.2 Advertising**

All forms of advertising used to recruit and select staff/volunteers for childcare positions will include the following:

- The aims of GHK Ladies Hockey Club and, where appropriate, details of the particular programme involved.
- The responsibilities of the role.
- The level of experience or qualifications required (e.g. experience of working with children is an advantage).
- Details of GHK Ladies Hockey Club open and positive stance on ethical matters including child protection.
- A statement that the position applied for is regulated work (exempted post) and requires a PVG scheme membership which will be requested before the appointment is confirmed and after the applicant has been offered the position.

### **1.5.3 Pre-Application Information**

- Pre-application information for childcare positions will be sent to applicants and will include: A description of the position including roles and responsibilities.
- A candidate specification (e.g. stating qualifications or experience of working with children required).
- Application and self-declaration forms and guidance notes.
- Information on GHK Ladies Hockey Club and related topics.
- Evidence of qualifications will always be verified.

### **1.5.4 Application and Self-Declaration Form**

All applicants will be requested to complete an application and self-declaration form. The purpose of this is to obtain from the applicant relevant details for the position, including information on past criminal behaviour, records or investigations. The self-declaration form

shall be requested in a separate sealed envelope and will not be opened until the applicant is selected for an interview. If the applicant is not selected the form will be returned unopened to the applicant or destroyed.

### **1.5.5 References**

References will always be requested and thoroughly checked. Where possible at least one of these references will be from an employer or a voluntary organisation where the position required working with children in any of the following capacities: employee; volunteer; or work experience. References from relatives will not be accepted. If the applicant has no experience of working with children, specific training requirements will be agreed before their appointment commences.

### **1.5.6 Interview**

Interviews will be carried out for all positions which are regulated work. Where appropriate (e.g. the recruitment of a volunteer), a discussion will take place with the prospective volunteer.

### **Offer of Position**

Once a decision has been made to appoint, an offer letter will be sent to the applicant including the details of the position, any special requirements and the obligations (e.g. agreement to the policies and procedures of GHK Ladies Hockey Club), the probationary period and responsibilities of the role. The offer must be formally accepted and agreed to in writing (e.g. by the individual signing and dating their agreement on the offer letter and returning it to GHK Ladies Hockey Club). A volunteer agreement will be completed for voluntary positions.

The applicant's appointment will only be confirmed when:

- The self-declaration form has been opened and considered
- Satisfactory references have been received and checked
- A satisfactory PVG Scheme Record / Scheme Record Update has been received

### **1.5.7 Membership of the PVG Scheme**

GHK Ladies Hockey Club is registered with Central Registered Body in Scotland. Individuals carrying out regulated work with children within GHK Ladies Hockey Club must be members of the PVG Scheme. GHK Ladies Hockey Club will require the successful applicant to submit a Scheme Record / Scheme Record Update with will be returned and processed by GHK Ladies Hockey Club lead signatory.

### **1.5.8 Overseas Applicants**

Applicants from overseas being appointed to positions of regulated work are required to join the PVG Scheme. Applicants from overseas will also be requested to provide a recent police check from their relevant country where possible. Where this is not possible, or in addition to the police check, the following information, where relevant to the position, will be requested:

- A statement from the governing body in the country of origin of the applicant and/or the country from which they are transferring in regard to their participation and suitability for the position.
- A statement from the international federation of the sport in regard to their participation and suitability for the position.

### **1.5.9 Induction**

GHK Ladies Hockey Club will offer an induction process for all volunteers. The induction process will include the following:

- Introduction to the Scottish Hockey Ethics Manual including Child Protection
- Agreement and signing up to the Club's Child Protection Policy and procedures, including the Code of Conduct through the Self Declaration form. An assessment of training, individual aims, needs and aspirations.
- Clarification of the expectations, roles and responsibilities of the position.

### **1.5.10 Training**

Newly appointed staff/volunteers will complete, or provide evidence of having completed within the previous three years, the following training over an agreed period:

- Safeguarding and Protecting Children (or equivalent)
- In Safe Hands (or equivalent)

- Any other identified training needs.

#### **1.5.11 Probation**

Newly appointed staff/volunteers will complete an agreed period of probation on commencement of their role.

#### **1.5.12 Monitoring and Performance Appraisal**

All staff in childcare positions will be monitored and their performance appraised. This will provide an opportunity to evaluate progress, set new goals, identify training needs and address any concerns of poor practice. All volunteers in childcare positions will be supervised.

#### **1.5.13 Ongoing Suitability**

Once an individual is in a position of regulated work, GHK Ladies Hockey Club will require the individual to complete a self-declaration form and apply for a Scheme Record Update every two years. This ensures the organisation is continually risk assessing staff/volunteers to keep participating children safe.

#### **1.5.14 Retention of Staff and Volunteers**

GHK Ladies Hockey Club recognises the contribution of all staff and volunteers to achieving the aims of GHK Ladies Hockey Club and will ensure that measures are in place to support the retention of staff and volunteers.

#### **1.5.15 Existing staff/volunteers joining PVG Scheme**

For existing members of staff/volunteers, who were not previously checked or were previously enhanced disclosure checked for a childcare position under the Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003, GHK Ladies Hockey Club will require those individuals to become PVG Scheme members if they are carrying out regulated work with children.

At the appropriate time, existing members of staff/volunteers will be notified by a Retrospective checks letter giving information on the process. Staff/volunteers will be required to complete a self-declaration form and submit a Scheme Record/Scheme Record

Update application. This will ensure, over time that everyone in regulated work in the organisation is a PVG Scheme member.

#### **1.5.16 Retention and Destruction of Disclosure Certificates**

GHK Ladies Hockey Club will provide PVG Scheme Membership checks on behalf of its member Districts and Clubs. This will include the processing of checks, and the retention of PVG Scheme Membership. PVG Scheme Membership numbers from these certificates will be transferred to GHK Ladies Hockey Club's CRM and any additional backup system in place. These certificates will be kept for a period of no longer than three months, when they will be destroyed by shredding by an additional signatory. This period will be flagged up by the CRM.

#### **1.5.17 New vetting information on PVG Scheme Records**

If new vetting information becomes available, either through retrospective checks of existing members of staff/volunteers or an ongoing suitability process, it is important to consider this information alongside a newly completed self-declaration form to assess any risks. Should any risk be identified, it will then be necessary to follow GHK Ladies Hockey Club Responding to Concerns about the Conduct of a Member of Staff/Volunteers and/or Disciplinary Procedures.

#### **1.5.18 Consideration for Children's List or Barred Individuals**

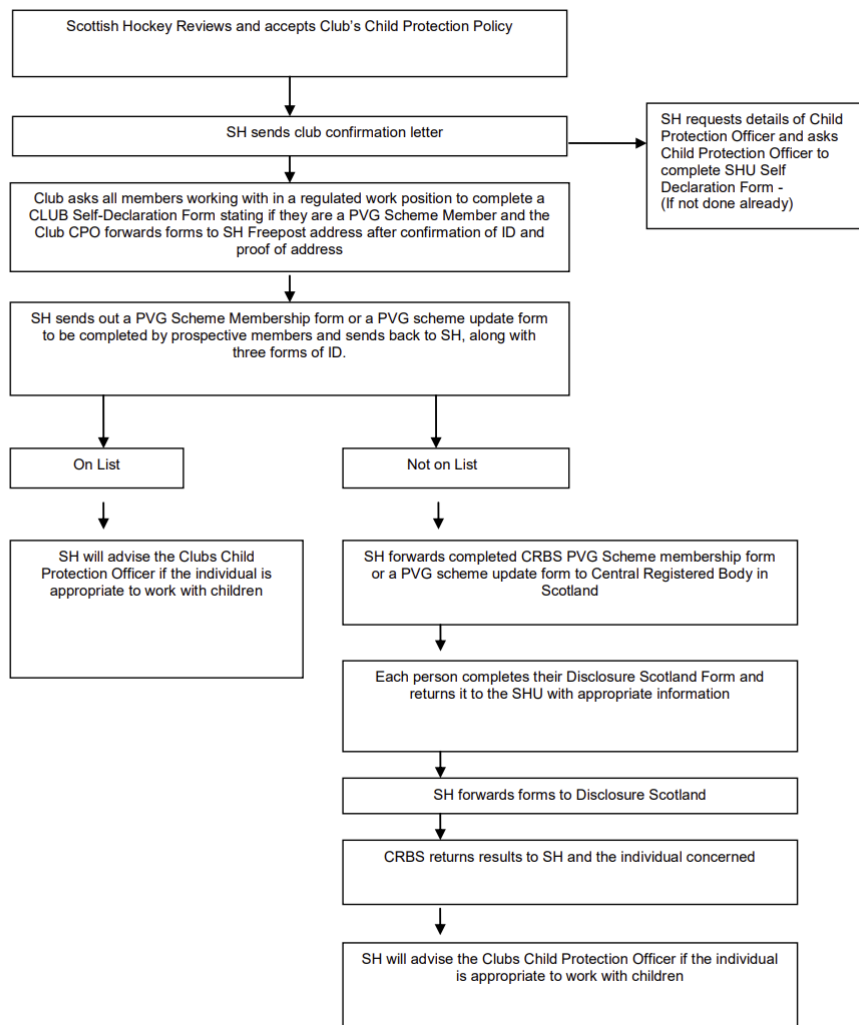
If Disclosure Scotland inform GHK Ladies Hockey Club that an individual is barred, that member of staff/volunteer will be removed from regulated work with children immediately in line with the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007 duties for organisations.

If Disclosure Scotland notifies GHK Ladies Hockey Club that a member of staff/volunteer is considered for listing that individual will be suspended as a precaution until the outcome of the case is determined. Remember that suspension is not a form of disciplinary action and does not involve pre-judgment. In all cases of suspension the welfare of children will be the paramount concern.

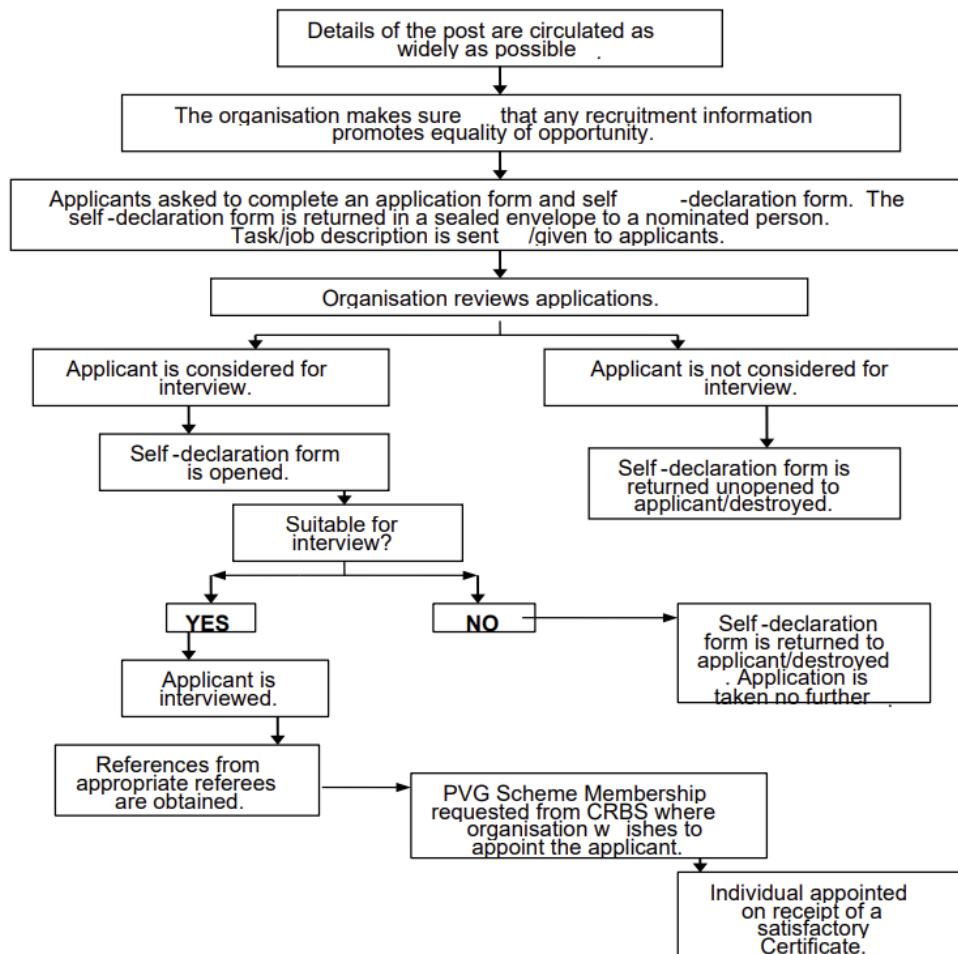
#### **1.5.19 PVG Scheme Member leaves GHK Ladies Hockey Club**

GHK Ladies Hockey Club will update Disclosure Scotland on PVG Scheme members who are no longer in regulated work with children on behalf of the organisation. Should a member of staff/volunteer not be in contact with GHK Ladies Hockey Club, GHK Ladies Hockey Club will then inform Disclosure Scotland that the individual is no longer in regulated work with children within the organisation.

**PROTECTION OF VULNERABLE GROUPS CHECK**



## Recruitment and Selection Procedure for Child Care Positions





## **1.6 CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN IN SPORT**

A Code of Conduct has a number of important functions. It:

- sets out what behaviour is acceptable and unacceptable
- defines standards of practice expected from those to whom it applies
- forms the basis for challenging and improving practice
- helps to safeguard staff by encouraging them to adhere to agreed standards of practice
- sets out for children and parents the standards of practice which they and the organisation should expect from those who work/volunteer with children.

GHK Ladies Hockey Club supports and requires all members to observe the following standards of practice, including verbal and non-verbal actions when involved in activities with children.

All concerns about breach of this Code of Conduct will be taken seriously and responded to in line with GHK Ladies Hockey Club's Policy and Procedure for dealing with the conduct of participants and/or Procedure for Responding to Concerns about Child Abuse.

### **1.6.1 Good Practice**

- Make sport fun, enjoyable and promote fair play.
- Treat all children equally, with respect, dignity and fairness.
- Involve parents wherever possible.
- Build balanced relationships based on mutual trust that empower and include children in the decision-making process.
- Always work in an open environment. Avoid private or unobserved situations.
- Put the welfare of each child first before winning or achieving performance goals.
- Be an excellent role model including not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of children.
- Give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Recognise the developmental needs and capacity of children and avoid excessive training and competition, pushing them against their will and putting undue pressure on them.

### **1.6.2 Practice to Be Avoided**

In the context of your role within GHK Ladies Hockey Club, the following practice should be avoided:

- Having 'favourites' – this could lead to resentment and jealousy by other children and could be misinterpreted by others.
- Spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others.
- Entering children's bedrooms on trips away from home, unless in an emergency situation or in the interest of health and safety. If it is necessary to enter rooms, alert the occupants by knocking and announcing your intention to enter. The door should remain open, if appropriate.
- Where possible, doing things of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves.

### **1.6.3 Practice Never To Be Sanctioned**

In the context of your role within GHK Ladies Hockey Club, the following practices will never be sanctioned:

- Engaging in sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Engaging in rough or physical contact except as permitted within the rules of the game or competition.
- Forming intimate emotional, physical or sexual relationships with children.
- Allowing or engaging in touching a child in a sexually suggestive manner.
- Allowing children to swear or use sexualised language unchallenged.
- Making sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
- Reducing a child to tears as a form of control.
- Allowing allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- Inviting or allowing children to stay with you at your home.
- Coaches and other leaders sharing a room alone with a child for sleeping accommodation.

Some residential facilities offer dormitory sleeping arrangements where leaders may be required to share with children. In such circumstances organisers must ensure that at least

two adults who have been recruited and selected using the recommended procedure are present, preferably one male and one female, and that such arrangements have been discussed and agreed with children and parents in advance. In some circumstances older children may be required to share rooms with senior team mates (i.e. over 18s). If this is necessary, it should be discussed and agreed in advance with the young person and the parents (where appropriate and practicable). The young people involved should also be aware of whom they should speak to if they have any worries or concerns during this time.

### **I.7 SAFE IN CARE GUIDELINES**

These guidelines provide practical guidance for those working and/or volunteering directly with children on practices to keep children safe and to promote a safe operating environment for the member of staff/volunteer. These guidelines compliment and should be read in conjunction with the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children in Sport.

Breach of these guidelines may be dealt with under GHK Ladies Hockey Club's Policy and Procedures for Dealing with the Conduct of Participants and/or Procedure for Responding to Concerns about a Child. Sports organisations have a duty of care towards all children involved in activities. Children under the age of 16 years should not be placed in positions of sole responsibility in relation to other children. These guidelines apply to all children and young people under the age of 18 years.

Common sense should be applied when considering the circumstances of older children and all children should have the opportunity to express their views on matters which affect them, should they wish to do so. As sport takes place in many different structures, locations, environments and formats, it is impossible to provide specific guidance on many of the issues covered. The following guidelines are therefore based on generally recognised good practice and common sense. Ultimately, most practical situations will require a judgment to be made about what is practicable and reasonable in the circumstances.

### **1.7.1 Adult to Child Ratios**

As a guide, the following ratios are recommended in the National Care Standards:

Early Education and Childcare up to the Age of 16 (Scottish Executive, 2005):

Age: 3 and over                      1:8

If all children are over 8        1:10

All activities should be planned to involve at least two adults, preferably one male and one female. Scottish Hockey recommends coaching ratios of 1 coach per team (1:16), but also that coaches should never work alone. Therefore for a coaching activity you could have one coach and a helper to provide the appropriate supervision ratios.

As a general guide, the following factors will also be taken into consideration in deciding how many adults are required to safely supervise children:

- The number of children involved in the activity.
- The age, maturity and experience of the children.
- Whether any of the group leaders or children has a learning or physical disability or special requirements.
- Whether any of the children have challenging behaviour.
- The particular hazards associated with the activity.
- The particular hazards associated with the environment.
- The level of qualification and experience of the leaders.
- The programme of activities.

There may be other considerations which are specific to the sport or environment in which the sport takes place.

### **1.7.2 Physical Contact**

All forms of physical contact should respect and be sensitive to the needs and wishes of the child and should take place in a culture of dignity and respect for all children. Children should be encouraged to express their views on physical contact. In the first instance, coaching techniques should be delivered by demonstration (either by the coach or an athlete who can display the technique being taught). Educational instruction should be

clearly explained with a description of how it is proposed to handle or have contact with the child before doing so. This should be accompanied by asking if the child is comfortable.

Manual support should be provided openly and must always be proportionate to the circumstances. If it is necessary to help a child with personal tasks e.g. toileting or changing, the child and parents/carers should be encouraged to express a preference regarding the support and should be encouraged to speak out about methods of support with which they are uncomfortable. Staff/volunteers should work with parents/carers and children to develop practiced routines for personal care so that parents/carers and children know what to expect. Do not take on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained e.g. manual assistance for a child with a physical disability.

### **1.7.3 First Aid and the Treatment of Injuries**

All staff/ volunteers must ensure:

- Where practicable all parents/carers of children under 16 have completed a Partnership with Parents form before their child participates in Hockey.
- There is an accessible and well-resourced first aid kit at the venue.
- They are aware of any pre-existing medical conditions, medicines being taken by participants or existing injuries and treatment required.
- Only those with a current, recognised First Aid qualification treat injuries. In more serious cases assistance should be obtained from a medically qualified professional as soon as possible.
- A Significant Incident Form is completed if a child sustains a significant injury along with the details of any treatment given. Common sense should be applied when determining which injuries are significant.
- Where possible, access to medical advice and/or assistance is available.
- A child's parents/carers are informed of any injury and action taken as soon as possible.
- The circumstances in which any accidents occur are reviewed to avoid future repetitions.

### **1.7.4 Sexual Activity**

Within sport, as within other activities, sexual relationships do occur. It is important to

address sexual activity both between children and young people and between adults and young people.

Sexual activity between children/young people involved in sport should be prohibited during team events, in sports facilities and social activities organised by GHK Ladies Hockey Club. Inappropriate or criminal sexual behaviour committed by a young person may/will lead to disciplinary action in accordance with GHK Ladies Hockey Club's Policy and Procedures for Dealing with the Conduct of Participants and reports being made to external agencies such as the police or social services. Sexual interactions between adults and young people (16+) involved in sport raise serious issues given the power imbalance inherent in the relationship.

Where a young person is of the age of consent the power of the adult over that young person may influence their ability to genuinely consent to sexual activity. A coach or other adult in a position of authority may have significant power or influence over a young person's career.

Sexual activity between adults and young people (16+) involved in the same sport should be prohibited when the adult is in a position of trust or authority (coach, trainer, official). Inappropriate or criminal sexual behaviour committed by an adult should lead to suspension and disciplinary action in accordance with GHK Ladies Hockey Club Policy and Procedures for Dealing with the Conduct of Participants, which in the case of criminal action must include contacting the police. Sexual activity between adults and children under the age of 16 is a criminal act and immediate action must be taken to report it to the police.

### **1.7.5 Managing Challenging Behaviour**

Staff/volunteers delivering activities to children may, from time to time require to deal with a child's challenging behaviour.

These guidelines aim to promote good practice which can help support children to manage their own behaviour. They suggest some strategies and sanctions which can be used and also identify unacceptable actions or interventions which must never be used by staff or volunteers.

These guidelines are based on the following principles:

- The welfare of the child is the paramount consideration.
- A risk assessment should be completed for all activities which take into consideration the needs of all children involved in the activity.
- Children must never be subject to any form of treatment that is harmful, abusive, humiliating or degrading and should always be able to maintain their respect and dignity.
- No member of staff should attempt to respond to challenging behaviour by using techniques for which they have not been trained.

### **Planning Activities**

Good coaching practice requires planning sessions around the group as a whole but also involves taking into consideration the needs of each individual athlete within that group. As part of a risk assessment, coaches should consider whether any members of the group have been challenging in the past or are likely to present any difficulties in relation to either the tasks involved, the other participants or the environment.

Where staff/volunteers identify any potential risks, strategies to manage those risks should be agreed in advance of the session, event or activity. The risk assessment should also identify the appropriate number of adults required to safely manage and support the session including being able to adequately respond to any challenging behaviour and to safeguard other members of the group and the staff/volunteers involved. All those delivering activities to children should receive training on these guidelines and should be supported to address issues of challenging behaviour through regular supervision.

### **Agreeing Acceptable and Unacceptable Behaviours**

Staff, volunteers, children and parents/carers should be involved in developing an agreed statement of what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. They should also agree upon the range of options which may be applied in response to unacceptable behaviour (e.g. dropped from the team for one game etc). This can be done at the start of the season, in advance of a trip away from home or as part of a welcome session at a residential camp. Issues of behaviour and control should regularly be discussed with staff, volunteers, parents/carers and children in the context of rights and responsibilities.

It is beneficial to ask children as a group to set out what behaviour they find acceptable and unacceptable within their group/team. It is also helpful to ask them what the consequences of breaking these rules should be. Experience shows that they will tend to come up with a sensible and working set of 'rules'. If and when such a list is compiled, every member of the group can be asked to sign it, as can new members as they join. It can then be beneficial to have a copy of the 'rules' visible for reference during the activity.

### **Managing Challenging Behaviour**

In dealing with children who display risk-taking or challenging behaviours, staff and volunteers might consider the following options:

- Time out - from the activity, group or individual work.
- Making up - the act or process of making amends.
- Payback - the act of giving something back.
- Behavioural reinforcement - rewards for good behaviour, consequences for negative behaviour.
- Calming the situation - talking through with the child.
- Increased supervision by staff/volunteers.
- Use of individual 'contracts' or agreements for their future or continued participation.
- Consequences e.g. missing an outing.

Adults and children shall never be permitted to use any of the following as a means of managing a child's behaviour:

- Physical punishment or the threat of such.
- The withdrawal of communication with the child.
- Being deprived of food, water or access to changing facilities or toilets.
- Verbal intimidation, ridicule or humiliation.

Staff and volunteers should review the needs of any child on whom consequences are frequently imposed. This review should involve the child and parents/carers to ensure an informed decision is made about the child's future or continued participation in the group or activity. Whilst it would always be against the wishes of everyone involved Hockey,



ultimately, if a child continues to present a high level of risk or danger to him or herself, or others, he or she may have to be barred from activity in the sport.

### **Physical Interventions**

The use of physical interventions should always be avoided unless it is absolutely necessary in order to prevent a child injuring themselves, injuring others or causing serious damage to property. All forms of physical intervention shall form part of a broader approach to the management of challenging behaviour.

Physical contact to prevent something happening should always be the result of conscious decision-making and not a reaction. Before physically intervening, the member of staff or volunteer should ask themselves, 'Is this the only option in order to manage the situation and ensure safety?' The following must always be considered:

- Contact should be avoided with buttocks, genitals and breasts. Staff/volunteers should never behave in a way which could be interpreted as sexual.
- Any form of physical intervention should achieve an outcome that is in the best interests of the child whose behaviour is of immediate concern.
- Staff/volunteers should consider the circumstances, the risks associated with employing physical intervention compared with the risks of not employing physical intervention.
- The scale and nature of physical intervention must always be proportionate to the behaviour of the young person and the nature of harm/ damage they might cause.
- All forms of physical intervention should employ only a reasonable amount of force - the minimum force needed to avert injury to a person or serious damage to property – applied for the shortest period of time.

Staff/volunteers should never employ physical interventions which are deemed to present an unreasonable risk to children or staff/volunteers. Staff/volunteers shall never use physical intervention as a form of punishment. Any physical intervention used should be recorded as soon as possible after the incident by the staff/volunteers involved using the Significant Incident Form and passed to the Child Protection and Welfare Officer as soon as possible. A timely debrief for staff/volunteers, the child and parents/carers should always take place following an incident where physical intervention has been used. This should include

ensuring that the physical and emotional well-being of those involved has been addressed and ongoing support offered where necessary.

Staff/volunteers, children and parents/carers should be given an opportunity to talk about what happened in a calm and safe environment. There should also be a discussion with the child and parents/carers about the child's needs and continued safe participation in the group or activity.

### **1.7.6 Transporting Children**

Where it is necessary to transport children, the following good practice is required.

Where parents/carers make arrangements for the transportation of children to and from the activity, out with the knowledge of GHK Ladies Hockey Club it will be the responsibility of the parents/carers to satisfy themselves about the appropriateness and safety of the arrangements.

Where GHK Ladies Hockey Club makes arrangements for the transportation of children the members of staff/volunteers involved will undertake a risk assessment of the transportation required. This will include an assessment of the following areas:

- Ensuring that all vehicles and drivers are correctly insured for the purpose.
- Ensuring the driver has a valid and appropriate license for the vehicle being used.
- All reasonable safety measures are available e.g. fitted, working seatbelts, booster seats where appropriate.
- An appropriate ratio of adults per child.
- Ensuring drivers have adequate breaks. When transporting children, wherever possible they should be in the back seat of the car for health and safety reasons.
- Where practicable and planned, written parent/carer consent will be requested if staff/volunteers are required to transport children.

To safeguard the member of staff/volunteer the following good practice is required:

- Agree a collection policy with parents/carers which will include a clear and shared understanding of arrangements for collection at the end of a session.

- Always tell another member of staff/volunteer that you are transporting a child, give details of the route and the anticipated length of the journey.
- Take all reasonable safety measures e.g. children in the back seat, seatbelts worn.
- Where possible, have another adult accompany you on the journey.
- Call ahead to inform the child's parents/carers that you are giving them a lift and inform them when you expect to arrive.

### **1.7.7 Collection by Parents / Carers**

On some occasions, parents/carers can be late when picking their child up at the end of a session. It is not the responsibility of GHK Ladies Hockey Club to transport children home on behalf of parents/carers who have been delayed. It is therefore important for the guidelines below to be followed: It is clear that while the club/session/training is running then leaders and coaches have a duty of care to the children that are in their charge. This is a principle of good practice and one, which we all should to sign up to.

When the session has finished, obligations that we have under guidance, good practice and legislation still remain. We still have care and control of the child in the absence of a parent/carer or other responsible adult. To help avoid this situation occurring in the first place, here are some points to consider: Make sure that GHK Ladies Hockey Club literature, application forms and consent forms;

- Are clear about starting and finishing times of sessions.
- Are clear about the expectations of parents/carers not to drop children off too early and collect children promptly when sessions finish.
- Ask parents/carers whether they give consent for children to go home unaccompanied (according to their age and stage).
- Have a late collection telephone contact and number as part of the Members Registration & Contacts Form.
- Where possible make sure that there is more than one adult/leader to lock up at the end of a session.
- Discuss and rehearse with members of staff/volunteers how to deal with being left alone with a child.
- Put preventative measures in place (points 1 and 2) and draw up simple guidelines about how the situation should be dealt with if it arises. Although as a general rule

we should not put ourselves in the position of being alone with a child there are exceptions and this situation is one of them.

- Remember the welfare of the child has to take precedence, so leaving children alone is not an option.
- Ensure that you have access to a record of the child's address, contact telephone number and an alternative phone number e.g. of a grandparent or other responsible adult. You need this information to contact the adult responsible for the child and ask them to collect the child. If you are unable to contact anyone then you have to make a decision of whether to take the child home yourself (see point 5) or call the police (point 6) If you are left alone with a child then transparency is the key.

Keep a record of your actions (use the guidelines above in Transporting Children re; good practice to safeguard member of staff/volunteer) and make sure that you inform GHK Ladies Hockey Club's Child Protection and Welfare Officer and parents/carers as soon as possible. When all else fails call the police.

### **1.7.8 Trips Away From Home (Involving Overnight Stays)**

Designate a Child Protection and Welfare Officer for the Trip.

Those in charge of the group will be responsible for the safety and wellbeing of children in their care. It is recommended that one of the group leaders' co-ordinates the arrangements to safeguard the safety and welfare of children during the trip. The Child Protection and Welfare Officer should ensure all practical arrangements have been addressed and act as the main contact for dealing with any concerns about the safety and welfare of children whilst away from home.

A detailed itinerary will be prepared and copies provided to the designated contact for GHK Ladies Hockey Club and parents. In the case of National Squads, the Manager, or designated assistant, will be the Child Protection and Welfare Officer for the trip Risk Assessment Potential area of risk should be identified at the planning stage through a risk assessment, which should be recorded in writing. Safeguards should be put in place to manage the risks, where appropriate. Risk assessment should be an on-going process throughout the trip as groups can often find themselves in unexpected situations despite the best laid plans!

## **Travel Arrangements**

Organisers must ensure there is adequate and relevant insurance cover (including travel and medical insurance). If the trip involves travel abroad, organisers shall ensure they are aware of local procedures for dealing with concerns about the welfare of children and are familiar with the details of the emergency services in the location of the visit. Children should be informed of any local customs. (For more details see Guidelines on Transporting Children).

## **Adult to Child Ratios**

All trips away should be planned to involve at least two adults, preferably one male and one female where possible. The guidelines on adult to child ratios above, will inform an assessment of the numbers of adults required to safely supervise the group. Those involved should be recruited and selected in accordance with the procedure for recruitment and selection of staff/volunteers in regulated work with children.

Group leaders should be familiar with and agree to abide by GHK Ladies Hockey Club Child Protection Policy, procedures and Code of Conduct. Accommodation Organisers should find out as much as possible about the accommodation and the surroundings at the planning stage. Where possible, an initial visit to the venue/accommodation should take place to help those organising the trip identify all practical issues and allow time to address them in advance, in consultation with children and parents/carers where appropriate.

The following is a (non-exhaustive) list of some of the practical things which should be considered in advance about the arrangements for accommodation:

- Location: central and remote locations both present different challenges.
- Accommodation facility: health & safety of building confirmed by owners/providers.
- Sleeping arrangements. These will enable suitable sharing in terms of age and gender and appropriately located staff/volunteer bedrooms for both supervision and ease of access in case of emergency. Parents/carers and children should be consulted in advance about arrangements for sharing where possible and appropriate.
- Appropriate safeguards where others have access to the sleeping quarters.
- Special access or adaptive aids required by group leaders or children. #
- Environmental factors.

- Personal safety issues.
- Exchange Visits/Hosting

Before departure, organisers should ensure there is a shared understanding of the standards expected during home stays between them, host organisation/families, parents/carers and children themselves. These standards should include arrangements for the supervision of children during the visit. Host families should be appropriately vetted (adults should be PVG Scheme members) where possible or equivalent police checks undertaken and references thoroughly checked. Organisers, parents/carers and children should all be provided with a copy of emergency contact numbers.

Children should be aware of who they should talk to if problems arise during the visit. Daily contact should be made with all children to ensure they are safe and well. Residential at a Facility/Centre Organisers should ensure the facility is appropriately licensed and has adequate and relevant insurance cover in place. The facility should have a policy on the protection of children and Health and Safety. Adequate security arrangements should be in place and facility staff should have been appropriately vetted. Facility staff involved in the training or instruction of children must be appropriately qualified and trained.

Organisers should ensure there is adequate supervision of the group for the duration of the stay, particularly when the facility is being shared with other groups. Involving Parents/Carers where possible, a meeting should be held with parents/carers before departure to share information about the trip, answer their questions and make joint decisions about arrangements where appropriate.

A Code of Conduct shall be agreed with children and parents/carers in advance of the trip along with sanctions for unacceptable behaviour. Parents/carers must complete a Safe in Care - SGB Partnership with Parents Form and provide emergency contact details. In the event of an emergency at home during the trip, parents/carers should be encouraged to make contact with the group leaders in the first instance so that arrangements can be put in place to support the child on hearing any distressing news.

## **During the Trip**

Organisers must ensure arrangements are in place for the supervision and risk assessment of activities during free time. Children shall not be allowed to wander alone in unfamiliar places. Group leaders should have clear roles and responsibilities for the duration of the trip. They must not be over familiar with or fraternise with children during the trip and remember that they are in a position of trust at all times. The use of alcohol and/or drugs or engaging in sexual relationships (between two young people) should not be condoned during the trip, even if the legislation relating to any of these behaviours is more lenient than in Scotland.

Group leaders should maintain an overview of the wellbeing of all children during the trip. This can help to identify issues at an early stage and resolve them as quickly as possible. Children can participate in this process by, for example, taking turns to complete a daily diary about the trip. This can be an overt or discreet way for them to communicate things (both positive and negative) that they want you to know.

## **After the Trip**

Where appropriate, a de-brief will take place with all those involved in the trip, including children. This will provide an opportunity to reflect on what went well, not so well and what could have been done differently. Feedback will be used to inform future trips.

## **1.8 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

The aim of these guidelines is to enable GHK Ladies Hockey Club to promote their activities and communicate easily with members. But it can also put children and young people at considerable risk, which is why safeguards must be put in place.

GHK Ladies Hockey Club will follow the following guidelines:

- Where possible, try to ensure that no one is excluded, e.g. young people who may not have access to a mobile phone/internet etc;
- that written permission is sought from parents/carers for all children under 16 years;
- that the need for the technology is clearly identified and its use is specific;
- that it is the organisation who is communicating information – one-to-one interaction is strongly discouraged and safeguards should be in place and settings adjusted to prevent this happening;
- children and young people should be briefed about the introduction of the technology.

They should also be given information on how to keep themselves safe and who to report any concerns to in GHK Ladies Hockey Club. All concerns about the inappropriate use of technology will be dealt with in line with GHK Ladies Hockey Club Policy and Procedure for Dealing with the Conduct of Participants. This may include the concerns being reported to the police. Further advice is available from the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP).

### **1.8.1 Communications Technology**

There are significant benefits for organisations using texts/emails and setting up social networking sites. Not only is it cheap, it's one of the most direct forms of communication with young people. However, there are risks. Adults who seek to harm children have been known to use messaging to “groom” children. This area is now specifically addressed by the Protection of Children and Prevention of Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2005.

For children and young people, the safeguarding risks of these technologies include:



- inappropriate access to, use or sharing of personal details (e.g. names, email addresses);
- unwanted contact with children by adults with wrongful/questionable intent;
- being sent offensive or otherwise inappropriate material;
- online bullying by peers;
- grooming for sexual abuse;
- direct contact and abuse.

For adults, risks involved include:

- their communication with children being misinterpreted;
- potential investigation (internal or by statutory agencies);
- potential disciplinary action.

### **1.8.2 Text/Email**

Staff/volunteers must consider whether it is necessary to communicate with children via text and email. The general principle is that all communications with children should be open, transparent and appropriate.

Good practice would include agreeing with children and parents/carers what kind of information will be communicated directly to children by text message. This information should only be “need to know” information such as the last minute cancellation of a training session.

In the first instance parent/carer consent must be obtained for all children under 16 years. Contact should always be made at the phone number/email address the parent has provided on the child’s behalf. Parents/carers should be offered the option to be copied in to any messages their child will be sent.

Although consent is not legally required for young people aged between 16 and 18 it is still recommended that parents are informed of the intention to send their child(ren) emails or texts. It is also good practice to obtain the consent of the 16 to 18-year-old.

The following good practice is also required:

- All phone numbers/email addresses of children and young people should be recorded and kept securely in a locked cabinet or password-protected electronic file or database;
- The number of people with access to children and young people's details should be kept to a practical minimum. A record should be kept of their numbers/addresses (preferably by GHK Ladies Hockey Club Child Protection and Welfare Officer);
- Messages should never contain any offensive, abusive or inappropriate language. They should not be open to misinterpretation;
- The organisation should be clear that messages should be sent only to communicate details of meeting points, training, match details, competition results etc.
- The same message should be sent to every member of the group/team.
- One-to-one messaging arrangements between coaches/volunteers and children should be strongly discouraged.

### **1.8.3 Internet**

The internet brings with it an opportunity for organisations to extend their community profile, advertise and communicate easily with their members. Sometimes this is done via social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter.

Thought should be given to content, tone and how sites or social networking sites and pages will be monitored. In terms of publishing information and pictures the following good practice should be noted:

- Written parent/carer consent must be obtained for all children aged under 16 before publishing any information or pictures of a child. If the material is changed from the time of consent, the parents/carers must be informed and consent provided for the changes.
- Special care must be taken in relation to vulnerable children e.g. child fleeing domestic violence or a child with a disability, and consideration given to whether publication would place the child at risk.
- Young athletes who have a public profile as a result of their achievements are entitled to the same protection as all other children. In these cases, common sense

is required when implementing these guidelines. All decisions should reflect the best interests of the child.

### **Use of Images and Information**

- Information published on the websites/social networking sites must never include personal information that could identify a child e.g. home address, email address, telephone number of a child. All contact must be directed to GHK Ladies Hockey Club Credit for achievements by a child should be restricted to first names e.g. Tracey was Player of the Year 2002.
- Children must never be portrayed in a demeaning, tasteless or a provocative manner. Children should never be portrayed in a state of partial undress, other than when depicting an action shot within the context of the sport. Attire such as tracksuits or t-shirts may be more appropriate.
- Information about specific events or meetings e.g. coaching sessions must not be distributed to any individuals other than to those directly concerned.

### **Concerns**

- Any concerns or enquiries about publications or the internet should be reported to GHK Ladies Hockey Club Child Protection and Welfare Officer.

### **1.8.4 Social Networking Sites**

The following is recommended if the organisation decides to allow mutual access between it and its members (including children):

- Obtain written permission from parents/carers of under 16s to allow mutual interaction with the organisation profile. Make parents/carers aware of the profile's existence, the site the child will be accessing and the restrictions of use for this preferred site.
- An official agreement should be in place which states that access to members' profiles are used only to pass on relevant information or to answer questions regarding organisation or sport issues. This agreement should also be incorporated into GHK Ladies Hockey Club's Rules or Code of Conduct.
- Set up a GHK Ladies Hockey Club profile rather than staff/volunteer profiles. This avoids access from members to individual's profiles.

- Keep GHK Ladies Hockey Club's profile on “private” - allowing only members access to it (the organisation can monitor this and accept or decline requests to join).
- Informal online “chat” with members around subjects outside the sport/activity should be immediately discouraged. Private matters or questions should also be discouraged. However, any disclosures should be removed from the site and dealt with in line with Responding to Concerns about a Child/Concerns about the Conduct of a Member of Staff/Volunteer.

### **1.8.5 Internet Forums**

There has been an increase in the use and abuse of internet forums to target individuals or to engage contributors in debates which can cause upset and embarrassment to children and young people. Sites should be well monitored and any offending comments removed.

A coach, member of staff or volunteer should refrain from being drawn into any debates concerning selection, performance or personalities – even where the subject of the discussion is anonymous. This could be considered a breach of the code of conduct or poor practice.

### **1.8.6 Mobile Phone Cameras/Videos**

There have already been a number of cases where children have been placed at risk as a result of the ability to discreetly record and transmit images through mobile phones. There is also scope for humiliation and embarrassment if films or images are shared on popular websites such as YouTube. The use of mobile phones in this way can be very difficult to monitor.

The Procedure for the use of Photographs, Film and Video should be observed in relation to the use of mobile phones as cameras/videos. Particular care is required in areas where personal privacy is important e.g. changing rooms, bathrooms and sleeping quarters. No photographs or video footage should ever be permitted in such areas of personal privacy.

## **I.9 PROCEDURE FOR THE USE OF PHOTOGRAPHS, FILM AND VIDEO**

Photos and video clips can be used to celebrate achievements, promote your activities and let people know that bit more about your team, club or sport. Footage is also recorded for performance development reasons.

The aim of these guidelines is not to curb such activity but to ensure that children are protected from those who would seek to take or manipulate photos and video footage in a way that harms children or places them at risk of harm.

Some sports take place in areas where organisers have little or no control over the environment such as open river or areas to which the public have general rights of access e.g. the open countryside. In these circumstances, organisers should take all reasonable steps to promote the safe use of photographing and filming and to respond to any concerns raised.

### **I.9.1 Scope**

GHK Ladies Hockey Club will take all reasonable steps to promote the safe use of photographing and filming at all events and activities with which it is associated. However, GHK Ladies Hockey Club has no power to prevent individuals photographing or filming in public places. GHK Ladies Hockey Club reserves the right at all times to prohibit the use of photography, film or video at any event or activity with which it is associated.

### **I.9.2 Notification**

Parents/carers and children will be informed they may, from time to time, be photographed or filmed whilst participating in Hockey This could be for one of the following reasons:

- Video footage for performance development.
- Media coverage of an event or achievement.
- Promotional purposes e.g. website or publication Materials promoting events will state, where relevant, that photography and filming will take place. Those who have sought and obtained permission to photograph or film will be formally identifiable e.g. a badge or sticker will be issued, after production of the letter of approval and

### identification (Request for Permission to Use Camera and Video Equipment and Notification to Applicant)

Information about what to do if concerned about photographing and filming will be available at all events. Registration of intention to photograph will be required on the day. This enables tracking of the equipment and operator should concerns arise in the future.

#### **1.9.3 Permission**

Written consent must be obtained from the child's parents/carers before any photography or filming takes place. Special care must be taken in relation to vulnerable children e.g. child fleeing domestic violence or a child with a disability, and consideration given to whether publication or use of the pictures/film would place the child at risk. Young athletes who have a public profile as a result of their achievements are entitled to the same protection as all other children. In these cases, common sense is required when implementing these guidelines. All decisions should reflect the best interests of the child. All actions by GHK Ladies Hockey Club will be based on the best interests of the child.

#### **1.9.4 Use of Images and Information**

No unsupervised access or one-to-one sessions will be allowed unless this has been explicitly agreed with the child and parents/carers. No photographing or filming will be permitted in changing areas. All images and accompanying information will comply with GHK Ladies Hockey Club Safe in Care Guidelines, where this is within the control of GHK Ladies Hockey Club. GHK Ladies Hockey Club will ensure that all negatives, copies of videos and digital photograph files are stored in a secure place. These will not be kept for any longer than is necessary having regard to the purposes for which they were taken. Images will not be shared with external agencies unless express permission is obtained from the child and parents/carers.

#### **1.9.5 Concerns**

Anyone behaving in a way which could reasonably be viewed as inappropriate in relation to filming or photographing should be reported to the person in charge on the day. They should be approached for an explanation. If a satisfactory explanation is not provided, the circumstances should be reported to the person in charge on the day or GHK Ladies

Hockey Club Child Protection and Welfare Officer. Where appropriate concerns should also be reported to the police.

## **I.10 CLUBHOUSES AND CHANGING ROOMS**

One of the areas where children are particularly vulnerable at many sports facilities is the locker/changing/shower room. Limited changing facilities sometimes mean that people of all ages regularly need to change and shower during the same period. To avoid possible misunderstandings and embarrassing situations, adults need to exercise care when in the changing room at the same time as children. However, bullying can be an issue where children are left unsupervised in locker rooms, and a balance should be struck depending on the situation.

In general it is better if one adult is not alone to supervise in a locker room, and extra vigilance may also be required if there is public access to the venue. If, in an emergency, a male has to enter a female changing area, or vice versa, another adult of the opposite gender should accompany him or her.

The following advice may be useful: Wherever possible, adults should avoid changing or showering at the same time as children. Parents/carers need to be aware that on occasions, adults and children may need to share a changing facility. It is recommended that particular attention is given to the supervision of children aged 10 and under in changing rooms. It is advisable for adults not to be alone with any such child under these circumstances.

If children are uncomfortable changing or showering in public, no pressure should be placed on them to do so. While some organisations may be restricted to changing rooms for the purposes of team talks, if at all possible another area should be considered for this. If there are no other options, it is best practice to wait until all children are fully dressed.

## **I.11 VOLUNTEERS AGED 18 OR UNDER**

There is no legal barrier to anyone aged 18 or under becoming a coach or volunteer with children or young people. If their remit falls into that of regulated work as per the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007 then they should be subject to the same recruitment and selection procedures as other volunteers, including Scheme Record/Scheme Record Update (note that there is no lower age limit with regards to PVG Scheme Membership).

Anyone under 16 is defined as a child (under the Children (Scotland) Act 1995), and it is not recommended that they take up regulated work with children. They can, however, be encouraged to help out and should be supervised by a more senior qualified coach or volunteer who has been appropriately vetted. In turn, the organisation has a responsibility to support the supervising coach.

Remember that young coaches or volunteers may come under different pressures (e.g. lack of respect from peers, closeness in age could lead to possible relationship) so regular supervision, training and extra support is recommended. It is important that adult to child ratios are reassessed as a young volunteer may not be experienced/capable of overseeing a group of children and young people.



## **2 RESPONDING TO CONCERNS**

### **2.1 Why it is important to respond to concerns?**

It takes considerable courage for a child or adult to disclose abuse. Disclosures need to be handled very carefully and sensitively to avoid causing further distress to the child. All concerns must be responded to in a way that ensures that a child receives appropriate help and support and to ensure that appropriate action is taken against those who pose a risk to children and to protect not only the child involved but all other children. Robust procedures for responding to concerns will:

- help to avoid those receiving information from engaging in judgements.
- reassure those who report concerns that an appropriate course of action will ensue.
- support those charged with managing concerns by providing them with a step-by-step process to follow.
- safeguard the rights of those against whom complaints or allegations have been made. It is not the job of anyone in GHK Ladies Hockey Club to decide whether or not a child has been abused. It is, however, everyone's responsibility to report concerns.

### **2.2 Confidentiality**

The following is taken from *Sharing Information About Children at Risk: A Guide to Good Practice* (Scottish Executive, 2003). Information provided to organisations should remain confidential unless permission has been given to share the information by the individual concerned or the safety of that person or another person may be at risk. If there is a reasonable concern that a child may be at risk of significant harm, this will always override a professional or organisational requirement to keep information confidential. It is good practice to inform parents and children about the kind of situations which may lead to them having to share information with other agencies.

### **2.3 Defamation**

Concerned adults are sometimes reluctant to report concerns about abuse for fear that the person suspected will sue them for defamation if the allegation turns out to be unfounded. To be defamatory a statement must first of all be untrue. Even if subsequently shown to be untrue, the statement will be protected by 'qualified privilege' if it is made to the

appropriate authority “in response to a duty, whether legal, moral or social or in the protection of an interest” (Norrie K, Defamation and Related Actions in Scots Law, 1995). Unjustified repetition of the allegations to other persons will not be protected by privilege. The qualification on privilege refers to statements made by malice. If a statement, even to the appropriate authority, can be shown to be motivated by malice, then an action of defamation could be successful. (Taken from Guidelines for Child Protection Prepared for the Independent Schools in Scotland, Kathleen Marshall, Second Edition, January 1997)

## **2.4 PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING TO CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD**

These procedures apply to all staff and volunteers involved in GHK Ladies Hockey Club.

### **2.4.1 Concerns about the General Welfare of A Child (NOT Involving Concerns About Child Abuse).**

GHK Ladies Hockey Club is committed to working in partnership with parents whenever there are concerns about a child. Parents have the primary responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of their children. In most situations, not involving the possibility of the abuse of a child, concerns should be discussed with parents. For example, if a child seems withdrawn, he/she may have experienced an upset in the family, such as a parental separation, divorce or bereavement. Common sense is advised in these situations.

Any significant, untoward or unusual incidents which cause concern about the welfare of a child should be recorded on the Significant Incident Form and reported to GHK Ladies Hockey Club Child Protection and Welfare Officer or Club President(s) as soon as possible. Parents should also be informed of the circumstances as soon as possible.

Advice should be sought from GHK Ladies Hockey Club Child Protection and Welfare Officer if there is any uncertainty about the appropriate course of action where there are concerns about the general welfare of a child.

### **2.4.2 What To Do If a Child Tells You about Abuse**

No member of GHK Ladies Hockey Club shall investigate allegations of abuse or decide whether or not a child has been abused. Allegations of abuse must always be taken seriously. False allegations are very rare. If a child says or indicates they are being abused or information is obtained which gives concern that a child is being abused, the information must be responded to on the same day in line with the following procedure:

- Respond
- React calmly so as not to frighten the child.
- Listen to the child and take what they say seriously. Do not show disbelief.
- Reassure the child they are not to blame and were right to tell someone.

- Be aware of interpreting what a child says, especially if they have learning or physical disabilities which affect their ability to communicate or English is not their first language.
- Do not assume that the experience was bad or painful - it may have been neutral or even pleasurable.
- Avoid projecting your own reactions onto the child.
- Avoid asking any questions. If necessary only ask enough questions to gain basic information to establish the possibility that abuse may have occurred. Only use open-ended, non-leading questions e.g. Who? Where? When?
- Do not introduce personal information from either your own experiences or those of other children.

Avoid:

- Panicking.
- Showing shock or distaste.
- Probing for more information than is offered.
- Speculating or making assumptions.
- Making negative comments about the person against whom the allegation has been made.
- Approaching the individual against whom the allegation has been made.
- Making promises or agreeing to keep secrets and giving a guarantee of confidentiality.

Where there is uncertainty about what to do with the information, GHK Ladies Hockey Club's Child Protection and Welfare Officer must firstly be consulted for advice on the appropriate course of action. If GHK Ladies Hockey Club's Child Protection and Welfare Officer is unavailable or an immediate response is required the police and social work services must be consulted for advice. They have a statutory responsibility for the protection of children and they may already hold other concerning information about the child. Record any advice given.

If you are concerned about the immediate safety of the child: • Take whatever action is required to ensure the child's immediate safety. • Pass the information immediately to the police and seek their advice.

### **2.4.3 Record**

Make a written record of the information as soon as possible using the Significant Incident Form, completing as much of the form as possible. The following information will help the police and social workers decide what action to take next:

- Child's name, age and date of birth.
- Child's home address and telephone number.
- Any times, dates or other relevant information.
- Whether the person making the report is expressing their own concern or the concerns of another person.
- The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any injuries occurred using the child's own words.
- The nature of the concern. Include all of the information obtained during the initial account (e.g. time, date, location).
- A description of any visible (when normally dressed) injuries or bruising, behavioural signs, indirect signs (do not physically examine the child).
- Details of any witnesses.
- Whether the child's parents have been informed.
- Details of anyone else who has been consulted and the information obtained from them.
- If it is not the child making the report, whether the child has been spoken to, if so what was said using the child's own words.
- The child's views on the situation.

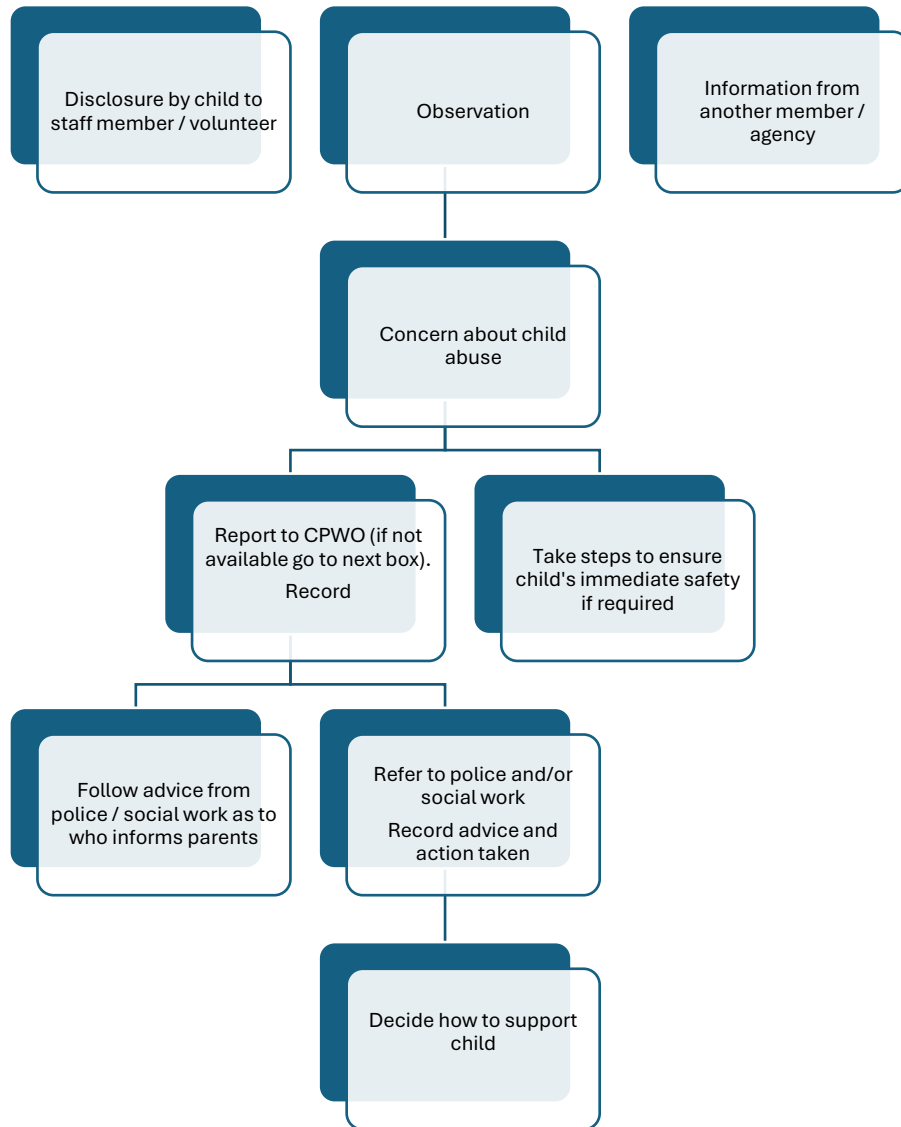
If completing the form electronically, do not save copies to the hard drive or floppy disk. Print a copy, sign and date and then delete immediately. Pass the record to social work services or the police and to GHK Ladies Hockey Club's Child Protection and Welfare Officer that day.

### **2.4.4 Sharing Concerns with Parents**

Where there are concerns that the parent(s) may be responsible for or have knowledge of the abuse, sharing concerns with the parent(s) may place the child at further risk. In such

cases advice must always firstly be sought from the police or social work services as to who informs the parents.

### 2.4.5 Responding to Concerns about Child Abuse



## **2.5 Procedure for Responding to Concerns about the Conduct of a Member of Staff or Volunteer**

This section of the procedures should be read in conjunction with GHK Ladies Hockey Club's Policy and Procedures for Dealing with the Conduct of Participants. Section 2.4 (above) 'Procedure for responding for concerns about a child' applies whether the information is about a member of staff or someone not connected in any way with the sport.

The following section details the procedure to be followed where the concern is about a member of staff or volunteer appointed by GHK Ladies Hockey Club or representatives (referred to as staff). These procedures aim to ensure that all concerns about the conduct of a member of staff are dealt with in a timely, appropriate and proportionate manner.

No member of staff of GHK Ladies Hockey Club in receipt of information that causes concern about the conduct of a member of staff towards children shall keep that information to himself or herself, or attempt to deal with the matter on their own. In the event of an investigation in to the conduct of a member of staff all actions will be informed by the principles of natural justice:

- Employees will be made aware of the nature of concern or complaint.
- Where the concern is about possible child abuse, advice will firstly be taken from the police as to what can be said to the employee.
- An employee will be given an opportunity to put forward their case.
- GHK Ladies Hockey Club will act in good faith, ensure the matter is dealt with impartially and as quickly as possible in the circumstances.

In all cases where there are concerns about the conduct of a member of staff towards children, the welfare of the child will be the paramount consideration. At any point in the management of concerns about the conduct of a member of staff, advice may be sought from the police or social work services.

### **2.5.1 Initial Reporting of Concerns**

Any concerns for the welfare of a child arising from the conduct of a member of staff must be reported to the Club President(s) and/or GHK Ladies Hockey Club Child Protection and Welfare Officer within 24 hours of the concern arising, as soon as practically possible.

Where the concern is about the Club President(s), it must be reported to the Child Protection and Welfare Officer. Where the concern is about the Child Protection and Welfare Officer it must be reported to the Club President(s) or the Club Secretary if the Club President(s) is unavailable.

### **2.5.2 Recording**

Concerns must be recorded using the Significant Incident Form as soon as possible.

Reporting the concerns to the line manager and/or Child Protection and Welfare Officer should not be delayed by gathering information to complete the form or until a written record has been made.

All subsequent actions taken and reasons for decisions shall be contemporaneously recorded on the Significant Incident Form, signed and dated by the line manager and/or Child Protection and Welfare Officer or the person appointed to manage the response to the concerns. Where Performance Management Procedures/ Disciplinary Procedures are invoked, a written record will be made of all actions and reasons for decision. Guidance on the storage, sharing and retention of such records is contained in the relevant procedure.

### **2.5.3 Establishing the Basic Facts**

Once the concerns have been reported the Child Protection and Welfare Officer will:

- Establish the basic facts
- Conduct an initial assessment of the facts in order to determine the appropriate course of action.
- Consult external agencies such as the police and social work services for advice at any time. This is important because they may hold other important information which, when considered alongside the current concerns builds a significant picture of concern.



## **2.5.4 Conducting the Initial Assessment**

The Child Protection and Welfare Officer or Club President(s) will conduct the initial assessment.

The purpose of the initial assessment is to clarify the nature and context of the concerns. It should determine whether there is reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child has been abused/ harmed or is at risk of abuse or harm. Every situation is unique so guidance cannot be prescriptive.

- Where the established facts support a concern about possible abuse, the initial assessment will not form part of the disciplinary investigation.
- Subject to the nature and seriousness of the situation, if it is not clear at this stage whether a criminal offence may have been committed the member of staff may be approached as part of the information gathering process.
- Where the nature and seriousness of the information suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed, or that to assess the facts may jeopardise evidence, advice will be sought from the police before the member of staff is approached.
- An initial assessment of the basic facts may require the need to ask a child(ren) some basic, open-ended, non- leading questions solely with a view to clarifying the basic facts. It may also be necessary to ask similar basic questions of other children, or other appropriate individuals.
- Interviewing children about possible abuse and criminal offences is the sole remit of specially trained police officers and social workers. Questioning of children by those conducting an initial assessment should always be avoided as far as possible. If it is necessary to speak to the child in order to clarify the basic facts best practice suggests that consent from the parent be obtained.

Possible outcomes of initial assessment:

- i) No further action (facts do not substantiate complaint).
- ii) Situation is dealt with under procedures to manage poor practice; and/or,
- iii) Disciplinary investigation (by GHK Ladies Hockey Club).
- iv) Child protection investigation (jointly by police and social work services).
- v) Criminal investigation (by the police).

- vi) The results of a criminal investigation may well influence the disciplinary investigation, but not in all cases.
- vii) Civil proceedings (by the child/family who alleged abuse).

### **2.5.5 Initial Assessment Supports Concerns About Poor Practice And/Or Misconduct (But Not Possible Child Abuse)**

The President(s) and/or Child Protection and Welfare Officer will deal with the situation and pending the outcome of the investigation, precautionary suspension will be considered in all cases where there is significant concern about the conduct of a member of staff towards children. The welfare of children will be the paramount concern in such circumstances. Where the circumstances meet the referral criteria set out in the Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003, GHK Ladies Hockey Club has a duty to make a referral to Scottish Ministers.

### **2.5.6 Initial Assessment Supports Concerns about Possible Child Abuse**

Where the initial assessment of information gives reasonable cause to suspect or believe possible child abuse the GHK Club President(s) or Child Protection and Welfare Officer will refer the concerns to the police and/or social work services as soon as possible on the day the information is received.

The GHK Child Protection and Welfare Officer or Club President(s) will make a written record of the name and designation of the social worker or the police officer to whom the concerns were passed together with the time and date of the call, in case any follow up is required.

Referrals to the police/social work services will be confirmed in writing by the GHK Child Protection and Welfare Officer or Club President(s) within 24 hours. A copy of the Significant Incident Form should be provided to the police/ social work services on request.

Appropriate steps will be taken to ensure the safety of the child(ren) or who may be at risk. The parents of the child(ren) involved will be informed as soon as possible following advice from the police/ social work services.

Advice will firstly be obtained from the police/social work services about informing the staff member involved about the concerns. If the advice is to inform the staff member, they will be told that information has been received which may suggest an allegation of abuse. As the matter will be sub judice no details will be given unless advised by the police. All actions will ensure the best evidence is preserved for any criminal proceedings while at the same time safeguarding the rights of the employee. GHK Ladies Hockey Club will take all reasonable steps to support a member of staff against whom an allegation of abuse has been made.

### **2.5.7 Precautionary Suspension**

In line with the club's disciplinary procedures, an individual may be suspended while a disciplinary investigation is carried out. Suspension is not a form of disciplinary action. The individual(s) involved will be informed in writing of the reason for the suspension within 48 hours. Suspension will be carried out by the Club President(s) in accordance with GHK Ladies Hockey Club's Policy and Procedures for Dealing with the Conduct of Participants. A suspension interview will be organised, at which the individual will be informed of the reason for the suspension (within the confines of sharing information) and given the opportunity to make a statement, which will be recorded, should they wish to do so.

### **2.5.8 Disciplinary Investigation**

Following advice from the police, cases that also involve a criminal investigation, will not preclude disciplinary action being taken provided sufficient information is available to enable the GHK Child Protection and Welfare Officer or Club President(s) to make a decision and that to do so does not jeopardise the criminal investigation.

### **2.5.9 False or Malicious Allegations**

In the very exceptional circumstances that an investigation establishes an allegation is false, unfounded or malicious:

- The staff member involved will receive an account of the circumstances and/or investigation and a letter confirming the conclusion of the matter. They may wish to seek legal advice.
- All records pertaining to the circumstances and investigation will be destroyed.
- The GHK Child Protection and Welfare Officer or Club President(s) will take all reasonable steps to support the individual in this situation.

- In these circumstances GHK Ladies Hockey Club will review the child's participation in Hockey.
- Data collected for the investigation will be destroyed in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

### **2.5.10 Historical Allegations of Abuse**

Allegations of abuse may be made some time after the event e.g. an adult who was abused as a child by someone who is still currently working with children. These procedures will be followed in the event of an allegation of historical abuse.

### **2.5.11 Referral to Disclosure Scotland**

GHK Ladies Hockey Club will refer to Disclosure Scotland the case of any member of staff/volunteer who (whether or not in the course of their role within the organisation) has:

- harmed a child
- placed a child at risk of harm
- engaged in inappropriate conduct involving pornography
- engaged in inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature involving a child, or
- given inappropriate medical treatment to a child.

**AND** as a result:

1. GHK Ladies Hockey Club has dismissed the member of staff or volunteer.
2. The member of staff or volunteer would have been dismissed as a result of the incident had they not resigned, retired or been made redundant.
3. GHK Ladies Hockey Club has transferred the member of staff/volunteer to a position in GHK Ladies Hockey Club which is not regulated work with children.
4. The member of staff or volunteer would have been dismissed or considered for dismissal where employment or volunteer role was not due to end at the expiry of a fixed term contract; or,
5. The member of staff or volunteer would have been dismissed or considered for dismissal had the contract not expired.

GHK Ladies Hockey Club will also refer the case of a staff member or volunteer where information becomes available after the member of staff or volunteer has:

- been dismissed by GHK Ladies Hockey Club
- resigned, retired or been made redundant,
- been transferred to another position in GHK Ladies Hockey Club which is not regulated work with children; and,
- where GHK Ladies Hockey Club receives information that a member of staff or volunteer who holds a position of regulated work has been listed on the Children's List, the member of staff or volunteer will be removed from the regulated work with children post.

If Disclosure Scotland notify GHK Ladies Hockey Club that a member of staff/volunteer is considered for listing that individual will be suspended as a precaution until the outcome of the case is determined. Remember that suspension is not a form of disciplinary action and does not involve pre-judgment. In all cases of suspension the welfare of children will be the paramount concern.

If Disclosure Scotland inform GHK Ladies Hockey Club that an individual is barred, that member of staff/volunteer will be removed from regulated work with children immediately in line with the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007.

### **2.5.12 Media**

All media enquiries relating to the conduct of a member of staff will be referred to the GHK Child Protection and Welfare Officer or Club President(s).

## 2.6 CONCERNS ABOUT THE CONDUCT OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

The procedures outlined in this section apply to the management of concerns about the conduct of volunteers.

### RESPONDING TO CONCERNS ABOUT THE CONDUCT OF A MEMBER OF STAFF OR VOLUNTEER

