

# Red Rose Road Runners Child Safeguarding Policy

## Introduction

Red Rose Road Runners are a friendly and sociable running club based in Preston and the South Ribble areas. An important aspect of the club is to encourage children and young adults to participate in running and to have fun and enjoy themselves in a safe and supportive environment. The Children Act 1989 defines a child as anyone who has not reached their 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday.

## Equality statement

Red Rose Road Runners shall operate on the basis of equal opportunities for all, ensuring no discrimination on the grounds of gender, race, age, culture, religion, sexual orientation, disability or financial means.

## Red Rose Juniors

The Red Rose Juniors are currently supported by a team of volunteers who are committed to weekly fun coaching sessions for **under 16s**, and around 15 children attend each week.

Measures are already in place to minimise the risk to children who come along to training and to ensure that responsibility for their welfare remains with their parent or legal guardian **at all times**:

- It is a requirement that in order to participate in these sessions, children must have a parent or legal guardian who is a member of Red Rose Road Runners.
- The parent or legal guardian must remain at the coaching venue for the duration of the session.
- In the event that a parent or legal guardian is not able to attend, a designated adult must be present, who has written permission from the parent or legal guardian to take responsibility for the child under their supervision.
- In addition, Red Rose Road Runners have a junior's team who participate in events at different venues, including cross country events, interclub events and road races. At all times, their welfare remains the responsibility of their own parent or legal guardian, or responsible adult accompanying them.
- Red Rose Road Runners will ensure that the group leaders have an up to date Disclosure and Barring Service clearance certificate.

## Child Safeguarding Policy

Red Rose Road Runners accepts that occasionally issues may arise and concerns may be raised regarding child safeguarding and welfare, both within and external to club activities. This document sets out guidelines for how such concerns will be dealt with.

The aim of this document is to look at best practice in working with children and ensure that all those involved in coaching sessions can do so in an appropriate manner, whilst providing a fun and safe experience. This Child Safeguarding Policy (CSP) sets out a framework for protecting and safeguarding children to meet the required, and best practice, standards of care that the club is committed to achieving. It aims to:

- minimise the risk to participants and volunteers
- encourage the enjoyment of all involved
- maximise the opportunity for children to participate to the best of their ability

Red Rose Road Runners accept that there are moral obligations to provide a duty of care, to protect all children and safeguard their welfare, irrespective of age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, religion or belief, sex or gender and sexual orientation. Those volunteering with children must have the following principles in mind:

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- All children have the right to protection from abuse.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse and poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- All individuals involved in athletics understand and accept their responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate officer.
- All children who take part in activities must have the opportunity to have fun and enjoy themselves in an environment that keeps them safe from harm.
- The protection and safeguarding of all children is paramount and should be based on prevention and best practice.
- Participation in physical activity is only part of a child's development and should always be balanced alongside other academic and extra-curricular activities.
- Confidentiality will be appropriately maintained at all times and the child's safety and welfare must be the overriding consideration when making decisions on whether to share information about them.

In order to meet this obligation, Red Rose Road Runners will:

- Ensure all children who take part in athletics are able to participate in a safe and fun environment.
- Respect and uphold the rights, wishes and feelings of children.
- Ensure that volunteers adopt best practise to safeguard and protect young people from abuse, and themselves from false allegations.
- Respond to any allegations appropriately and implement the appropriate complaints and child protection procedures.

- Ensure that the parents of children participating in coaching sessions remain present while the sessions take place. Facilities are in place to enable parents to observe and encourage their children to participate, and parents retain ultimate responsibility for the care of their children, or delegate that care to another responsible adult.
- Ensure that those volunteering at junior coaching sessions hold a valid Disclosure and Barring Service Certificate.

All adult volunteers should be aware of how to behave with children in order to minimise risk and in order to protect themselves from false allegations. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

Examples of best practice are:

- Being open and conducting all interactions with children in a public place.
- Avoiding situations where you are alone with one child.
- Maintaining an appropriate relationship with children; this means treating people fairly, with respect and avoiding favouritism.
- Being friendly and open and ensuring that relationships are appropriate for someone in a position of power and trust.
- Respecting all athletes and helping them to take responsibility for their own development and decision making.
- Avoiding unnecessary physical contact. In certain circumstances physical contact is perfectly acceptable and appropriate, as long as it is not intrusive or disturbing to the child.
- Being qualified and insured for the activities you are coaching and ensuring that your licence remains valid and that your practice is appropriate for the age and development stage of each child.

## Awareness of abuse

It is important that any person working with children has an awareness of different types of abuse. It is possible that a child who is experiencing some sort of abuse may disclose this information to a trusted adult, and it is important that any kind of disclosure is dealt with appropriately and sensitively.

Child abuse is any form of mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm. Abuse can happen to a child regardless of their age, gender, race or ability. Abusers can be adults or other young people, and are usually known to and trusted by the child and family. An individual may abuse or neglect a child directly, or may be responsible for abuse because they fail to prevent another person harming that child.

## Indicators of abuse

Most children find it difficult to disclose their concerns and that some groups in society will find it harder than others, specifically children from ethnic minority groups and children with disabilities. Abuse is not always easy to identify, however some signs may indicate that a child may be being abused are as follows:

Note that this is not an exhaustive list of indicators and alone cannot be seen to be definitive proof that a child or young person is being abused.

Physical abuse	Unexplained and unusual bruising, finger, strap and bite marks, cigarette burns, fractures, scalds, missing teeth. Fear of contact, aggression, temper, fear of going home, reluctance to change or uncover body, depression, withdrawal, cowering, bullying or abuse of others.
Emotional abuse	Weight change, lack of growth/development, unexplained speech disorders, self-harm, clothing inappropriate for child's age, gender or culture. Unable to play, fear of mistakes, fear of telling parents, withdrawn, unexplained speech and language difficulties, few friends.
Sexual abuse	Genital pain, bleeding, bruising, discharge, stomach pains, discomfort, pregnancy, incontinence, urinary infections or STDs, thrush, anal pain on passing motions. Apparent fear of someone, nightmares, running away, age inappropriate sexually explicit knowledge or behaviour, bed-wetting, eating problems, substance abuse, unexplained money or gifts, inappropriate masturbation, sexual approaches to others, sexual games with toys.
Neglect	Constant hunger, ill-fitting or inappropriate clothes, weight change, untreated conditions, continual minor infections, failure to supply hearing aids, glasses and/or inhalers. Always being tired, late, absent, few friends, regularly left alone, seeking adult company or withdrawing from people, stealing, no money, parent or carer not attending or interested.
Bullying	Weight change, unexplained injuries and bruising, stomach and headaches, incontinence, disturbed sleep, hair pulled out. Difficulty making friends, anxiety over school, truancy, withdrawn, depressed, anger, moodiness, suicide attempts, reduced performance, money or possessions reported as 'lost', stealing from the family, distress and anxiety on reading e-mails or texts.

## Responding to a disclosure.

1. **React** to any disclosure/concern/poor practice allegation made
2. **Report** to the relevant person or persons
3. **Record** the relevant information

## Stage 1: React

An adult may become aware of abuse/poor practice in a number of ways. A child may well tell you, a third party may report incidents or suspicions or you may have seen an incident or have strong suspicions.

If you have a concern regarding child safeguarding or abuse raised to you, you should:

- Always stay calm and listen.
- Not show you are either upset, disgusted or that you may disbelieve what you are hearing.

If a child reports a concern directly to you:

- Ensure that they are in a safe environment.
- Keep an open mind.
- Do not ask questions unless to clarify what is being said.
- Do not make assumptions or judgments about what is being said.
- Do not show shock or distaste.
- Do not make comments about the person against whom the allegations have been made.
- Always take the concerns raised seriously.
- Never promise to keep the concern a secret.
- Try to reassure them by explaining what action will be taken.
- Request that another person listens, if doing so does not stop the child disclosing the concern.
- Write down has been said as soon as possible, with the child's agreement.

If an adult reports a concern to you:

- Listen to what they are reporting and consider what action you need to take.
- Ask them if they have written down what they have observed in line with the information required in "recording" below.
- Ensure they understand the need for confidentiality.

Never

- Confront the alleged abuser.
- Promise to keep a secret.
- Take any action yourself until you have considered and shared the information appropriately.
- Act alone. Instead you should follow guidance in this document on whom to share the information with in an appropriate and proper manner.

## Stage 2: Report

All involved in Red Rose Road Runners have a responsibility to take action if they witness behaviour that they may deem to be inappropriate, and not think that they are overreacting or

that it is not their problem. While it is not the responsibility of volunteers and club members to decide whether a concern constitutes abuse, it is their responsibility to report any concerns about the welfare of a child. However, it is for the professionals to consider and decide if abuse has taken place. Disclose information only to those who “need to know.” Ensure confidentiality is maintained at all times and ensure that others with whom information is shared understand this confidentiality.

There could be many reasons why it necessary to report a concern including in response to:

- signs or concerns about potential abuse.
- something a child says.
- a significant and unexplained change in the child’s demeanour or behaviour.
- a concern raised by a third party e.g. another participant/volunteer/parent.
- an observation of inappropriate behaviour.

Concerns should be reported to the designated person at the club with responsibility for safeguarding.

### Stage 3: Record

- As specified above, written details of all concerns and incidents that take place whilst at training session.
- Records may be passed to the external agencies, such as the Police or Children’s Social Care Team, and therefore it is important that all information is recorded as soon as possible and is factual (a search for the necessary information should not delay in the reporting of the concern to the relevant agencies).

### Further action

Any person with information of a disclosure, allegation or concern about the welfare of a child must immediately report this to **Anneke Crosby** on [mail@redroseroadrunners.org](mailto:mail@redroseroadrunners.org)

All suspicions and disclosures must be reported appropriately.

It is acknowledged that strong emotions can be aroused particularly in cases of possible sexual abuse.

If the designated welfare officer is not available, an immediate referral to Children’s Social care should be made. The contact details are:

**Call Care Connect on 0300 123 6720 (8am - 8pm) or out of hours 0300 123 6722 (8pm - 8am).**

If you think a child is in immediate danger – don't delay, call the police on 999.

### Further information:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/signs-symptoms-effects/>

<http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/keeping-children-safe/tell-us-if-you-are-worried-about-a-child.aspx>