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**Darlington Cycling Club
Welfare & Safeguarding Policy**

**General Introduction**

1. It is the policy of Darlington Cycling Club to make every effort to safeguard its members from physical, sexual and emotional harm while participating in DCC activities. DCC takes all reasonable steps to ensure that, through relevant procedures and ride leader training all DCC Members taking part in DCC activities do so in a safe environment.
2. All DCC Ride Leaders, other volunteers, whether female or male, have an obligation to avoid creating distressing situations.
3. DCC’s welfare and safeguarding policy is based upon policies adopted by Cycling UK and British Cycling.

**Code of conduct**

1. As a DCC Ride Leader, you should:
* respect everyone as an individual
* provide a good example of acceptable behavior
* respect everyone's right to privacy
* show understanding when dealing with sensitive issues
* adhere to DCC’s policies
1. As a DCC Ride Leader you should not:
* permit abusive behaviour
* have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with others
* jump to conclusions or make assumptions about others without checking facts
* make suggestive or inappropriate remarks or actions
* deliberately place yourself or others in a compromising situation.

**Other adults present**

1. Ride Leaders and other volunteers should avoid situations where they are alone with a young person or vulnerable adult. This precaution protects all parties by removing the feeling of threat from an insecure participant, and by providing a witness if an accusation of improper behaviour is made. However, there may be occasions where this is not possible and a judgment will have to be made.

**Physical contact**

1. Physical contact between an individual and the Ride Leader or other volunteer should be avoided. There are instances when it is necessary, eg to demonstrate a skill, but such contact should remain impersonal so there is no risk of it being misinterpreted.

**Appropriate language**

1. Care should be taken about what is said, and the way it is said. Ride Leaders and other volunteers should avoid saying anything which could be interpreted as being aggressive, suggestive, or containing an innuendo.

**Creating impressions**

1. It is important that Ride Leaders and other volunteers do not create a false impression. Words and actions can be misunderstood, and care should be taken to avoid awkward situations. Should such a situation arise, it is essential to handle it with care and consideration to minimise embarrassment to Leaders, instructors and participants.

**Safeguarding Policy for Working with Young People and Vulnerable Adults**

1. DCC recognises it has specific obligations and duty of care when working with young people and vulnerable adults. The Children Acts 1989 and 2004 define children as young people up to 18 years of age and learning disabled young people up to 24 years of age.
2. Vulnerable adults may include, but are not limited to, riders with disabilities, whether mental or physical; new or inexperienced riders; and those who are less fit or competent by reason of age or ability.
3. The aim of the DCC Safeguarding Policy is to promote good practice by:
	1. providing young people and vulnerable adults withappropriate safety and protection whilst participating in a DCC activity
	2. giving all Ride Leaders and other volunteers the ability to make informed and confident responses to any specific issues they are faced with.
4. The policy applies to every DCC Member, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, disability, race, nationality or country of origin. It also applies to all DCC Ride Leaders and volunteers, and is designed to prevent the physical, emotional and sexual abuse or neglect of young people and vulnerable adults while they are participating in DCC activities.
5. It is also intended to prevent DCC Ride Leaders and volunteers from behaving in ways which may be well-intentioned but inadvisable, thus safeguarding them from unfounded accusations.
6. When working with young people and vulnerable adults, DCC Ride Leaders and volunteers should be aware of and follow the guidance in British Cycling’s [Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy](https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/zuvvi/media/bc_files/safeguarding/C13_-_Safeguarding__Protecting_Children.pdf) and [Safeguarding and Protecting Vulnerable Adults Policy](https://www.britishcycling.org.uk/zuvvi/media/bc_files/safeguarding/C14_-_Safeguarding__Protecting_Vulnerable_Adults.pdf). Topics covered in the guidance include:
	1. good practice
	2. duty of care
	3. use of photographic and/or film material
	4. recruitment and training of staff and volunteers
	5. responding to allegations, suspicions and disclosures
	6. internal reporting and investigation
	7. bullying
	8. confidentiality

Noting that British Cycling Policies on safeguarding and protecting children refer to a situation where adults are regularly coaching children and young people. DCC does not currently provide coaching sessions for children and young people. Should this situation change then DCC would need to review and update its safeguarding policy.

Ride Leaders and volunteers can refer to Appendix 1, which takes the key elements of British Cycling’s Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy and Safeguarding and Protecting Vulnerable Adults Policy, where relevant to DCC activities, and summarizes the key points.

1. As DCC Ride Leaders and volunteers are not trained to deal with situations of abuse, or to decide if abuse has occurred**, they** have a responsibility to report concerns around suspected abuse to the designated DCC Welfare Officer (WO), or if the WO is unavailable or implicated in any allegations to the Chair of DCC.
2. DCC should appoint a Welfare Officer. He/she will be required to report annually on any safeguarding and/or child protection issues which have arisen over the previous twelve months.
3. There should also be a review of policies and procedures approximately every three years or when there are changes to legislation or as a result of any other significant change or event.

**Appendix 1**

**Safeguarding and Protecting Children & Vulnerable Adults**

(*Summary of British Cycling Policies ‘Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy and Safeguarding and Protecting Vulnerable Adults Policy’)*

**General Principles**

1. Everyone who participates in cycling is entitled to do so in a safe and enjoyable environment.
2. It can be difficult to distinguish poor practice from abuse, whether intentional or accidental. **It is not the responsibility of any individual involved in cycling to make judgements regarding whether or not abuse is taking place, however, all DCC Ride Leaders should be able to recognise and identify poor practice and potential abuse, and act on this if they have concerns**.

**Ride Leaders should:-**

1. Aim to make the experience of cycling fun and enjoyable
2. Conduct / adhere to a risk assessment before undertaking any cycling related activities. .
3. Not tolerate the use of prohibited or illegal substances.
4. Treat all young people & vulnerable adults fairly and preserve their dignity.
5. Respect the developmental stage of each young cyclist and not risk compromising their welfare.
6. Ensure that the ride is appropriate to the physical, social and emotional stage of the development of the young rider, or if that is not practicable, ensure that the young rider and his/her parents are informed, so that they do not attempt to participate in that particular ride.
Adopt the same principles for vulnerable adults, if appropriate informing a Carer.
7. Always be publicly open when working with children and young people / vulnerable adults. Avoid situations where you (as Ride Leader or another Club Member ) and an individual child / young person are completely unobserved
8. Keep parents / carers informed about the content and nature of communications you have directly with their children (or a vulnerable adult) including emails and text messages.
9. Avoid unnecessary physical contact with young people / vulnerable adults. Physical contact (touching) can be appropriate so long as:
	1. it is neither intrusive nor disturbing.
	2. the reason that it is necessary has been fully explained.
	3. the rider’s permission has been openly given.
	4. it is delivered in an open environment

1. It is inappropriate for Ride Leaders and others in positions of trust to have an intimate relationship with a child less than 18 years. This could be a criminal offence, an ‘abuse of trust’ as defined by the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2000.
2. Ride Leaders must keep a written record of any injury or accident that occurs, together with details of any treatment given, and send this to the DCC Welfare Officer and Ride Coordinator within 3 days of the accident occurring. DCC strongly recommends that unless in an emergency Ride Leaders / Volunteers do not provide lifts or transport for young people under 18yrs / vulnerable adults; and if they do so (other than in an emergency) they must obtain written parental / carers consent for any travel arrangements. Ride Leaders / Volunteers providing transport must ensure they have the appropriate motor vehicle insurance. DCC will not accept any liability for any motor vehicle accidents, where Ride Leaders / Volunteers are transporting Members / Riders to/from an activity.

**Role of Parents**

1. DCC expects that Parents / Carers of DCC Members under 18yrs / vulnerable adults:
2. Talk regularly with their children / adult they care for, about their cycling activities and their welfare.
3. Monitor the relationships that are inevitably created through participation in cycling.
4. Monitor any communications that their child / adult they care for, receives from DCC regarding their participation in cycling.
5. Contact DCC’s Welfare Officer should there be concerns about any inappropriate behaviour.
6. Ensure children are properly attired for the likely weather and prepared with food & drink etc.

**Abuse**

1. Abuse is a broad term in the context of safeguarding. There are many degrees of abuse and it can take many forms. This can range from low-level name calling or ridiculing of a rider, which may be considered “poor practice” to serious neglect or physical attacks which would likely lead to a child protection investigation being conducted.
2. Abuse in all its forms can affect a child / vulnerable adult at any age. The effects can be so damaging that without appropriate intervention, they may continue to have a very negative impact upon an individual into adulthood.
3. Those who belong to a group that may be considered additionally vulnerable such as those with disabilities may be at increased risk of abuse through various factors such as stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, including ethnic or racial, isolation, powerlessness to protect themselves, inability to communicate that abuse has occurred.
4. It is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. **It is not the responsibility of DCC Ride Leaders / Volunteers to decide that abuse is occurring, but it is their responsibility to act on any concerns.**
5. Indications that a child / vulnerable adult is being abused may include one or more of the following:
	1. Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries or an injury for which an explanation seems inconsistent.
	2. The child / vulnerable adult describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her.
	3. Someone else, a child or adult, expresses concern about the welfare of a child / vulnerable adult.
	4. Unexplained changes in behaviour, e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn, displaying sudden outbursts of temper or behaviour changing over time.
	5. Inappropriate sexual awareness and /or engaging in sexually explicit behaviour.
	6. Distrust, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
	7. Difficulty in making friends / being prevented from socialising with others.
	8. Displaying variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite.
	9. Losing weight for no apparent reason.
	10. Becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt.

The above list is not exhaustive

1. Types of abuse include:
	1. Neglect - In a cycling context this could include not keeping young people /children / vulnerable adults safe by exposing them to undue cold, heat or the unnecessary risk of injury e.g. Ride Leaders allowing cyclists under their supervision to take part when inappropriately clothed for the prevailing conditions and /or a parent / carer consistently leaving a child without adequate provisions e.g. food, water, clothing, sun protection.
	2. Physical abuse – causing physical harm. E.g. by hitting, shaking, and assaulting a child/young person / vulnerable adult.
	3. Sexual abuse – in a cycling context this could be unnecessary and inappropriate physical contact, making suggestive comments to young riders or an inappropriately close relationship between a Ride leader / Volunteer and a child /young person / vulnerable adult.
	4. Emotional abuse – in a cycling context this could be a Ride Leader / Volunteers or other Club Member subjecting a rider to constant criticism, name-calling, sarcasm, bullying or racism.
	5. Bullying - The bully in cycling can be a parent who pushes too hard, a rider who intimidates or ridicules a peer. Ride Leader who places unfair pressure on a person.

**Responding to Suspicions and Allegations of Abuse**

1. Although most cases of abuse take place within the family setting, abuse can and does occur in cycling. It is essential that all allegations are taken seriously and appropriate action is taken.
2. **It is not your responsibility to decide if child abuse is taking place.**
3. **As Ride Leader it is your responsibility to report your concerns to the DCC Welfare Officer - no matter how trivial the concern may appear. Not acting is not an option.**
4. You may have concerns about abuse/poor practice because:
	1. You see it happening or recognise signs of abuse
	2. Someone reports it to you.
	3. A child approaches you directly.
5. If a child / vulnerable adult says or indicates that they are being abused, or you have concerns about their welfare you should:
	1. React calmly so as not to frighten them.
	2. Tell them they are not to blame and that it was right to speak up.
	3. Take what they say seriously.
	4. Keep questions to the absolute minimum necessary so that there is a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said.
	5. Reassure them, but do not promise to keep the matter secret – explain that to resolve the problem it will be necessary to inform other people as appropriate. The safety of the child is paramount - if the child needs urgent medical attention call an ambulance, inform the doctors of the concern and ensure they are made aware that this is a child protection issue.
	6. Record all information and report to the DCC Welfare Officer.
	7. All concerns that you may receive should be recorded. You are recording this information for yourself, so you have a record of what happened, the DCC Welfare Officer or other designated welfare person within the club, who will co-ordinate any action that needs to be taken. This information may also be passed onto the British Cycling Safeguarding Lead Officer so that they can advise DCC on the appropriate action and to the Police/Children’s Social Care Services if appropriate.
	8. It is not appropriate to share sensitive and confidential information with other people, e.g: DCC club committee members, members of DCC or other acquaintances outside cycling.
	9. In most situations, it is important that the DCC Welfare Officer or Club Chair involves parents / carers to clarify any initial concerns e.g. if a child / vulnerable adult seems withdrawn, they may have experienced a recent bereavement.
	10. Where a parent or carer may be responsible for the abuse or may not be able to respond to the situation appropriately they should not be involved, as it may place the child at greater risk.
	11. Any information relating to child protection / safeguarding should be held under secure conditions and only made available on a need-to-know basis only.
	12. The Darlington Borough Council website provides further guidance:
	<http://www.darlington.gov.uk>
	See - *Information Sharing - Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers*.

**Reporting**

1. The discovery that someone you know may be abusing a child vulnerable adult / will raise feelings and concerns.
2. Although it can be difficult to report such matters:
	1. The welfare of the child/young person / vulnerable adult is paramount.
	2. Being vigilant helps to protect children / young people / vulnerable adults
	3. Everyone has a duty of care to report any concerns they have immediately.
	4. A good reporting structure ensures that concerns are dealt with fairly.
3. In any case of physical or sexual abuse or where the child’s / vulnerable adults safety is at risk, you should contact one of the following statutory agencies immediately:
	1. The local Police Child Protection Team or in an emergency dial 999.
	2. The police should be involved if the apparent abuse is of a criminal nature or if the incident involves a person outside the child’s family. A record should be made of the crime reference number.
	3. Local Authority Children’s Social Care Services (formerly known as Social Services).This body has a statutory duty for the welfare of children, especially where the alleged person is a member of the child’s family.
4. The Samaritans (08457 909 090) will hold the Local Authority duty officer’s contact number.
5. NSPCC can provide advice (Freephone 24 hour helpline 0808 800 5000).
6. All telephone referrals to the above bodies should be confirmed in writing by you within

24 hours to that agency.

* 1. You should record the following:
	2. name and job title of the member of staff to whom the concerns were passed
	3. the time and date of the call

summary of the information shared and the response received.

**Sanctions**

1. DCC may take action to restrict a member’s involvement in DCC activities during an ongoing investigation. This is a neutral act and does not pre-empt any decision.

**DCC Club Welfare Officer (CWO)**

1. As DCC wishes to encourage young members (under 18 years old) it should appoint a Club Welfare Officer (CWO). This person must have a child-focussed approach, good communication skills and an ability to provide support and advice.

1. The CWO should endeavour to gain an understanding of British Cycling’s Safeguarding & Protecting Children Policy and keep up to date with the appropriate level of training. The CWO must also co-ordinate club responses and actions in response to safeguarding issues. They should be a member of the club’s committee.
2. CWO Role:
	1. To provide information and advice on child protection within the club.
	2. To ensure that the club adopts and follows the Safeguarding & Protecting Children Policy and procedures and to promote awareness of the policy within the club.
	3. Ensure that Ride Leaders / club volunteers are suitably recruited
	4. Receive information from Ride Leaders volunteers, young people or parents and

carers who have child protection concerns and record it and refer on to the appropriate authorities.

* 1. Assess the information promptly and carefully, clarifying or obtaining more information about the matter as appropriate.
	2. Ensure that appropriate information is available at the time of a referral and that the referral is confirmed in writing, under confidential cover.
	3. Advise the club officers regarding the appropriate levels of child protection training
	4. and/or guidance for all adults working with children in the club.
	5. Advise the club of further child protection training opportunities.

**Additional contact numbers for advice on safeguarding**

Services that can offer help and advice:

* Careline [www.carelineuk.org](http://www.carelineuk.org) 0845 434 5440
* Mencap [www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk) 0808 808 1111
* Mental Health Foundation [www.mentalhealth.org.uk](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk)
* Mind [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk) 0300 123 3393
* Ann Craft Trust [www.anncrafttrust.org](http://www.anncrafttrust.org) 0115 951 5400
* The Samaritans [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org) 08457 90 90 90
* Care Quality Commission [www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk) 03000 616161
* Public Concern at Work [www.pcaw.co.uk](http://www.pcaw.co.uk) 020 7404 6609
* Freedom to Care [www.freedomtocare.org](http://www.freedomtocare.org) 01978 750583
* Respond [www.respond.org.uk](http://www.respond.org.uk) 0207 383 0700
* Action on Elder Abuse [www.elderabuse.org.uk](http://www.elderabuse.org.uk) 0208 835 9280