

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

This policy covers children (i.e. persons under 18 years of ages) and vulnerable adults. The following information is for the guidance of cycle instructors, who, although working with children, will only be in contact with them for relatively short periods over a brief time scale. It follows the best practice advice issued by British Cycling in their publication 'Policy and Procedures for the Protection of children and vulnerable adults' (2003).

Anyone working as a cycle instructor must undergo a criminal record check undertaken by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) before delivering cycle training. This will be presented to the school during the commissioning of the cycle training course. Gloucestershire RSP recognises the responsibilities as listed below when working to deliver cycle training to children:

- Safeguard children from harm and abuse
- Take action when necessary to safeguard children
- Report any concerns about the welfare of children in their care

A key aspect of the child protection policy relating to cycle training is that it is the duty of instructors and other staff involved in the provision of cycle training to raise/report any concerns they have about any child under their supervision. An instructor may suspect that abuse has been inflicted on a child by an unknown third party; a colleague, a parent or teacher; or another child or group of children. If abuse is suspected a record must be kept of what has been said and it must be reported to the relevant authority. Acting on concerns is **not** the responsibility of the cycle trainer. Determining whether or not abuse has taken place is the domain of child protection professionals (social services and the police). However, the guidelines below will help to identify good practice in child protection when delivering cycle training.

Everyone who participates in cycling activities is entitled to an enjoyable and safe environment care and protection from abuse; the guidelines below are aimed at ensuring this is the case.

Instructors' conduct:

In order to avoid false accusations instructors should adhere to the policies and procedures laid down, follow the training syllabus and ensure that their personal behaviour is beyond reproach and unambiguous.

As such, instructors should;

Act as an excellent role model (no smoking or drinking alcohol while working with young people)

- Respect all individuals irrespective of age, ability, sex and sexual orientation, development stage, religion, race or colour.
- Ensure that young people can participate without fear of harassment, intimidation, bullying and abuse.
- Treat everyone fairly, giving similar attention to those with more and less ability.
- Put the child's welfare before personal achievement
- Maintain a safe and appropriate relationship with their trainees
- Any relationship must be built on trust
- Demonstrate proper personal behaviour and conduct at all times
- Refrain from touching the trainee unnecessarily, always explain and ask if there is any need to touch
- Ensure that all training is carried out in as safe an environment as possible
- Avoid being alone with a child
- Ensure parents or those responsible for the child understand if training is to be carried out on a one to one basis, and encourage them to be there if they wish. Such training should not take place in a secluded area.
- Do not leave a child in a situation that you cannot control or where another can abuse them.

- Hand over care of the child to an appropriate person at the end of a training session, do not leave them alone.
- Always encourage and do not shout. Encouragement will produce better results whilst shouting can be classed as abuse.
- Never reduce a child to tears.
- Never use inappropriate language or sexual references
- Take care that the training session is not too long or strenuous
- Try to ensure children are dressed appropriately for the activity
- Not keep them out if they are obviously suffering by being too wet, cold, hot, tired, thirsty or hungry.
- Be watchful of any symptoms of illness or distress.
- Under no circumstances hit or strike a child
- Return any child who cannot be controlled to the care of the teacher or parent
- Report any witnessed, or suspected, incident of abuse to the head teacher or person responsible for the course
- Explain, if any child confides that they have been abused, that they will have to report it further
- Report to the head teacher or any person responsible for the course any incident of abuse confided to them by a child
- Report any injury suffered by a child to the school, parent or course organiser
- Never take photographs of children without the express consent of their parent or guardian

Remember that abuse takes many forms

- Emotional: e.g. Showing anger
- Verbal: e.g. using sarcasm, putting down, bullying, applying too much pressure to achieve
- Physical: e.g. inflicting pain or injury
- Neglect: e.g. actions meaning children are in the rain too long, inappropriate kit, leaving child unsupervised
- Sexual: e.g. touching or sexually explicit language

Following the good practice guidelines listed above will ensure that:

- All instructors/assistants operate within an agreed ethical framework.
- Cycling makes a positive contribution to the development of young people.
- Instructors are protected from false allegations of abuse or poor practice.

Responding to Disclosure

If a child discloses an allegation of abuse, it is important that instructors/assistants know how to respond. The following points provide good practice guidance to follow:

- Do not interrupt the child, listen carefully to what they have to say.
- You should *not* promise that what they tell you will remain confidential. Find an early opportunity to explain that the information may have to be shared with others.
- Ask questions for clarification only and remember that it is not your duty to investigate the issue, only to establish the facts. Ensure that any questions you ask are not leading questions that suggest a particular answer.
- Give the child reassurance that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- Be sure to tell the child what you will do next and with whom you will share the information.
- It might be useful to make written notes immediately after a disclosure.