

THE BRITISH JUDO COUNCIL

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Approved 12th JUNE 2011

1. The purpose of this policy is to promote good practice with regard to the issues arising from child protection. The British Judo Council is committed to protecting all those in positions of vulnerability but the particular issues surrounding child protection justify a separate policy.
2. Allegations of or concerns about the abuse of children often evoke intense emotional responses in those dealing with them. It is **vital** that those involved in child protection issues or who deal with a potential complaint or incident deal with the matter **calmly, dispassionately and without prejudging**.
3. One of the difficulties in protecting children from potential abusers is that the abuser is usually both careful and secret in his or her behaviour. Some people will become involved in judo with the specific aim of making it easier to obtain access to children and young people.
4. On the other hand, the vast majority of those involved in judo are entirely respectful of and committed to the protection of children and young people. It is recognised that, for such people, some of the restrictions placed on contact with or behaviour towards children and young people may seem unnecessary or unduly prohibitive.
5. In order to ensure that the maximum protection is offered to children and young people, it is necessary for this policy to be robust and, moreover, to discourage or prevent activities which **expose the child or young person to risk of harm**. This has to be the primary aim of the policy and the British Judo Council is confident that its coaches, members and supporters will understand and support this vital aim.
6. For this reason the BJC requires all adults who have contact with children in a judo environment to have a CRB check on a biannual basis.
7. **GOOD PRACTICE –General**
The aim of the British Judo Council is to encourage our students to develop to their maximum potential in a safe and supportive environment. The following are **minimum standards** which are considered by the BJC to be necessary to provide such an environment for children and young people:

- (a) Instruction should take place in an “open” environment. Parents and carers should be able to observe the classes (albeit subject to conditions, such as a requirement that they do not interfere in the running of the lesson). Private situations behind closed doors are to be avoided. Children should not be encouraged to have “secret” discussions with adults in the club (although, this is different when a child is making a confidential disclosure [see later]);
- (b) All members should be treated equally with regard to courtesy, support, encouragement and the opportunity to ask questions. Children should be encouraged to raise questions when they have them and to report anything which is worrying them;
- (c) All members and children in particular should be treated with dignity. Reducing a child to tears or humiliating a child as a means of discipline are inappropriate;
- (d) The welfare of a child member is paramount **above** winning or achieving goals. For example, it is **not** appropriate to encourage a child of normal size and weight for their age to attempt dieting in order to make a lighter weight;
- (e) Whilst winning or achieving success is both laudable and to be encouraged, this is never to be done by sacrificing the overriding aim of child protection which is the welfare of the child. It is the **firm** policy of the BJC that a child’s welfare is enhanced by establishing in him or her an understanding of and commitment to fair play, enjoying sport, being modest in success and sporting in failure. The BJC will not tolerate any behaviour at tournaments, gradings or other events which contradicts this policy;
- (f) Coaches and officials are role models for children. It is, therefore, essential that they provide good examples by not engaging in improper or excessive activity in front of children (e.g. drinking, swearing);
- (g) Coaches and officials should work in collaboration with parents and other agencies where appropriate. Club instructors, in particular, often have to take care of children in place of their parents (e.g. at courses and competitions); it is vital that parents are kept aware of any specific issues which either may arise or have arisen.

8. GOOD PRACTICE- Specific

There are certain issues and situations which require specific consideration or mention:

(i) BEHAVIOUR

- (a) Sexist, racist and other discriminatory language or conduct is not acceptable. It must always be challenged by coaches and officials when encountered;
- (b) Bullying is unacceptable. Any episode of bullying should be addressed as soon as possible. Any coach, official or senior member engaged in bullying will be subject to the BJC'S disciplinary procedure;
- (c) Any sexual behaviour or comment towards (or in front of) children is inappropriate, even if meant light-heartedly;
- (d) Adults should not be alone with a child unless absolutely necessary. A child should not be isolated from other members of the club. Even if a "private" conversation has to occur, it is better that this is done in a room or space from which others can see the adult and vice versa;
- (e) Touching of children should be kept to a minimum. In judo, this a difficult requirement but care must still be taken. Children should be warned and, if possible, asked before a coach or adult touches them;
- (f) Accidental inappropriate touching should always be mentioned to the parents or guardians of the child concerned; and reported to club C.P officer /head coach.
- (g) Sometimes, touching is required "off the mat"(e.g. if a child genuinely needs assistance going to the toilet). Unless impossible, such assistance as the child needs must be provided by a member of the same sex as the child and the child must be encouraged to do as much as possible for him or herself. A child should be asked before any specific touching takes place, so as to make the exercise as collaborative and supportive as possible. It should be noted that if a child has special needs which make it **predictable** that "Off the mat" assistance will be required, then an appropriate parent or carer should be in attendance during the session.
- (h) Coaches and officials should exercise extreme caution not to place themselves in situations, which could cause suspicion or expose him or her to allegations of inappropriate behaviour. In particular, adults should never shower with or at the same time as children and should change in a separate area if possible.

- (i) Trips and journeys present a number of potential problems. A child should never be driven in another adults car (other than their own parents) without their parents' express permission. Adults should not share bedrooms with children (other than their own), nor should they invite children into their room.
- (j) Where possible, on any trip, there should be two male and two female adults present with the team. In any mixed team there should be at least one adult of each sex supervising the team. Boys and girls should not be permitted to share rooms and care should be taken, particularly with teenagers, not to permit inappropriate situations to occur.

(ii) THE INTERNET

Whilst there is nothing wrong with a club having a facebook page or using any other such means of club promotion, adults should not have individual accounts from which they have individual contact with children. It is better if adults do not contact children via the internet directly. Emails with information can and should usually be sent to parents or carers.

(iii) PHOTOGRAPHS & VIDEOING

There is nothing untoward in using video recording as a teaching aid, although care must be taken to keep recordings safe. The consent of the child and his/her parents should be obtained prior to such filming taking place.

Where possible, parents should be notified if photography will be taking place at any event. Whilst it is very difficult to prevent this (and most, if not all, of the photography taking place will be legitimate) it is vital that coaches remain vigilant to identify anyone who may be using the opportunity of an event to photograph or record children in vulnerable positions.

9. DEALING WITH DISCLOSURE

All disclosures or suspicions of child abuse or inappropriate behaviour should be taken seriously. A child should be given a safe environment in which to discuss the problem, preferably with two adults present (one to talk and one to record). The child should be told that they have done nothing wrong and encouraged to speak openly. The tone of the discussion should be open and supportive rather than formal and challenging. A record should be kept of any disclosure and the matter reported immediately to the BJC Head Office.

To ensure that this information is as helpful as possible , a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern, which should include the following:

- The child's name, age and date of birth of the child.
- The child's home address and telephone number.
- Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else.
- The nature of the allegation. Include dates, times, any special factors and other relevant information.
- Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Also any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes.
- Details of witnesses to the incidents.
- The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred.
- Have the parents been contacted?
- If so what has been said?
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so record details.
- If the child was not the person who reported the incident, has the child been spoken to? If so what was said?
- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details.
- Where possible, any referral to the police or social services should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours and the name of the contact who took the referral should be recorded.

If you are worried about sharing concerns about abuse with a senior colleague, you can contact social services or the police direct, or the NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000, or Childline on 0800 1111.

12. It is possible that police may have to become involved. For this reason, great care should be taken when speaking to other adults about the disclosure.

13. Coaches and officials should also keep a record of any incident within the club or on a club trip where any of the following have occurred:

- Accident;
- Injury;
- Accidental inappropriate touching;
- Any child misunderstands something which you or another adult has done;
- A child becomes obviously sexually aroused by something which you or anyone else has done;
- Anything which causes you concern about a potential child protection issue.

The record should detail the incident, the child concerned, the action taken and a copy, which shall be treated with the utmost care, should be sent to the BJC Head Office marked 'Confidential', 'For the attention of A Shaw'.