GOOD PRACTICE GUIDANCE
Staying Safe in Fencing

This good practice guidance is intended to complement policy and support best practice. Please see the Policy Pack for specific policies relating to safeguarding and wellbeing.

Adapted by Lesley O'Donnell

Version History

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Good Practice Guidance for Fencing

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These have been adapted for use from the Ten Steps to Safeguard Children in Sport document developed by Children 1st and have been divided into chapters for ease of reading.

This good practice guidance is intended to complement policy and support best practice. Please see the Policy Pack for specific policies relating to safeguarding.

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CHAPTER 1

Staying Safe in Fencing: an overview

These guidelines provide practical guidance for those working and/or volunteering directly with children.
This includes those who are travelling as part of a Scottish Squad.

These are intended to help keep children and vulnerable adults' safe and promote a safe working environment for the member of staff/volunteer.

These guidelines complement the Code of Conduct for Safeguarding Children in Sport. Breach of these guidelines may be dealt with under the appropriate Orkney Fencing Club/Scottish Fencing/British Fencing Policy as appropriate e.g. Disciplinary Procedure, Procedure for Responding to Concerns About a Child.

The law surrounding legal capacity is complex. Therefore, to avoid confusion and in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child this guidance refers to children and young people under the age of 18 years.

Sports organisations have a duty of care towards all children involved in activities.
Children under the age of 18 years should not be placed in positions of **sole** responsibility in relation to other children.

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. When in doubt err on the side of caution.

ADULT TO CHILD RATIOS
The following are the adult to child ratios recommended by the NSPCC (2013) for voluntary organisations:

Aged 0 - 2 years:	1 adult to 3 children
Aged 2 - 3 years:	1 adult to 4 children
Aged 4 - 8 years:	1 adult to 6 children
Aged 9 - 12 years:	1 adult to 8 children
Aged 13 - 18 years:	1 adult to 10 children.

If the group is mixed gender, the supervising staff should also include both male and female workers. When deciding on the number of adults required, it is important to bear in mind that these ratios are **guidelines** only: in certain situations, it will be necessary to have a higher number of adults than our recommendations suggest. If, for instance, the children or young people have specific support needs, or a risk assessment identifies behaviour as a potential issue for the group or event, the number of supervising adults will need to be higher.

If the age of the children attending is mixed, use the ***lowest age range*** for guidance with regards to 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 specific requirements
- Whether any of the children have challenging behaviour,
- The hazards associated with the activity,
- The hazards associated with the environment,
- The level of qualification and experience of the leaders,
- The programme of activities

Within the sport of fencing it is also essential that supervising adults ensure that all athletes wear appropriate fencing clothing/kit relevant to their age and stage of development. For example, it would be unsafe to allow a child under 12 to use a size 5 metal weapon.

CHAPTER 2

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A Code of Conduct has many essential 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/volunteers by encouraging them to adhere to agreed standards of practice
- sets out for children and parents/carers the standards of practice which they and the organisation should expect from those who work/volunteer with children.

Orkney Fencing 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 Orkney Fencing Club Procedure for Responding to Concerns about a child.

GOOD PRACTICE

- Make sport fun, enjoyable and promote fair play.
- Treat all children equally, with respect, dignity and fairness.
- Involve parents/carers wherever possible.
- Build balanced relationships based on mutual trust.
- Include children in the decision-making process wherever possible.
- Always work in an open environment, wherever possible. 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.
- Avoid excessive training and competition, pushing children against their will and putting undue pressure on them
- Alcohol will not be consumed when on duty during trips away with children and young people as part of a Scottish Squad. A duty rota will be agreed by the Team Manager for the trip

PRACTICE TO BE AVOIDED

In the context of your role within Orkney Fencing Club, the following 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, knock and say that you are coming in. The door should remain open, if appropriate.
- Where possible, doing things of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves.

UNACCEPTABLE PRACTICE

In the context of your role within Orkney Fencing Club, the following practices are unacceptable:

- Engaging in sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Engaging in rough or physical contact unless it is 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.
- A Coach and/or other leader sharing a room alone with a child.
- Drinking alcohol when on duty as a coach/support staff with any national squad of children and young people. This applies to all national squad trips, UK or international. Duty rota's will be created by the Team Manager for the trip.

Sign-up:

I have read and agree to abide by this Code of Conduct

I have also read and agree to abide by the *Orkney Fencing Club*'s Child Protection Policy, and all associated and relevant Procedures and Guidelines.

Name of staff member/volunteer: _____

Date signed: _____

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PARENTS'/GUARDIAN'S CODE OF CONDUCT

Fencer's Name: _____ Date: _____

- I hereby pledge to provide positive support, care, and encouragement for my child participating in Fencing by following this Parents' Code of Conduct.
- I will encourage good sporting behaviour by demonstrating positive support for all fencers, coaches, and referees at every competition, practice or other youth sports event.
- I will place the emotional and physical well-being of my child ahead of my personal desire to win.
- I will insist that my child play in a safe and healthy environment.
- I will require that my child's coach be trained appropriately and that the coach upholds the Coaches' Code of Conduct.
- I will support coaches, referees and volunteers working with my child, to encourage a positive and enjoyable experience for all.
- I promise to make a commitment to support referee's decisions and never challenge during a bout
- I will demand a sports environment for my child that is free from drugs, tobacco and alcohol
- I will remember that the game is for youth - not adults.
- I will do my very best to make fencing fun for my child. I will ask my child to treat other fencers, coaches, referees and officials with respect regardless of race, sex, creed or ability.
- I will help my child enjoy the fencing experience by doing whatever I can

Parent Signature _____

Date: _____

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Code of Conduct for Children and Young People (Sample code of conduct)

The Orkney Fencing Club is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of all its members.
The club believes that it is important that members, coaches, administrators and parents associated with the club should, at all times, show respect and understanding for the safety and welfare of others.

Therefore, members are encouraged to be open at all times and to share any concerns or complaints that they may have about any aspect of the club with Sam McArlie – Child Safety Officer.

Sports clubs for young people should offer a positive experience where they can learn new things in a safe and positive environment.

Please read this over with your child so that there is a clear understanding of what is expected of them.

As a member of the Orkney Fencing Club, you are expected to abide by the following this code of practice:

CHILDREN/YOUNG PEOPLE ARE EXPECTED TO:

- Be friendly and particularly welcoming to new members.
- Be supportive and committed to other team members.
- Not get involved in inappropriate peer pressure and push others into something they do not want to do.
- Keep within the defined training/sparring area.
- Behave and listen to all instructions from the coach. Play within the rules and respect the official and their decisions.
- Take care of equipment owned by the club.
- All members must respect the rights of everyone
- Bad language (swearing), bullying or name calling is not acceptable This includes bullying using Facebook, Whatsapp, chat-rooms or texting etc.
- Fencers must wear appropriate fencing kit to stay safe. If you are not sure ask a Coach
- Respect the Referee
- No smoking is allowed on any part of the premises
- Drinking alcohol or using drugs is not allowed at any time while representing your club or country
- Show respect to other youth members/leaders and show team spirit.
- Speak to a coach or a trusted adult if you are need help or are unhappy about anything

Everyone has a right to participate in sport, whatever their ability, in a safe and supportive environment. These guidelines help to ensure that Fencing is safe, and most importantly, fun.

Any misdemeanours and general misbehaviour will be addressed by the immediate coach and reported verbally to the designated person. Persistent misbehaviour will result in dismissal from the club. Parents will be informed at all stages. Dismissals can be appealed with final decisions taken by the club committee or referred to the governing body for advice depending on the disciplinary procedures within the sport.

Signature of Young Person: _____

Printed name Young person: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____

Printed name of Parent/Guardian: _____

Date:

CHAPTER 3

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 whenever possible (either by the coach or an athlete who can display the technique being taught). This is easy to achieve in fencing.

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 required 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 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.

CHAPTER 4

FIRST AID AND THE TREATMENT OF INJURIES

All staff/volunteers must ensure that all parents/carers of children have completed a Membership/Personal Details Form (as part of the preparation for travelling with the squad or joining a club for the first time) *before* their child participates in Fencing on a regular basis. It is helpful if this is co-ordinated by one person, usually the Team Manager/Lead Coach. The Team Manager/First Aider (if designated)/Lead Coach should be aware of any pre-existing medical conditions, medicines being taken by participants or existing injuries and treatment required.

There should be an accessible and well-resourced first aid kit at the venue. This may be the first aid kit held by the venue where the fencing takes place. However good practice would encourage easy access to the first aid kit in the venue/hall where fencing is taking place to avoid any delay in treatment.

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.

An Incident Form should be 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. If access to medical advice and/or assistance is available this should be utilised. A child's parents/carers should be informed of any injury and action taken as soon as possible. The circumstances in which any accidents occur should be reviewed to avoid future repetitions.

CHAPTER 5

SEXUAL ACTIVITY

Within sport, as within other activities, sexual relationships can and 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 Orkney Fencing Club.

Inappropriate or criminal sexual behaviour committed by a young person may/will lead to disciplinary action in accordance with the Orkney Fencing Club Disciplinary Procedure and reports being made to external agencies such as the police or social services as required.

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 sporting 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 will lead to suspension and disciplinary action in accordance with Orkney Fencing Club Disciplinary Procedures, 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.

CHAPTER 6

Managing 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 such as the importance of good planning and agreeing acceptable and unacceptable behaviours with sanctions which can be used.

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;

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. tidy up all the body wires, gloves etc). Discussing this can be done at the start of the season, in advance of a trip away or as part of a welcome session at a residential camp. It can be particularly helpful to involve the children and young people in discussing and compiling any responses or sanctions.

Issues of behaviour and control should regularly be discussed with staff, volunteers, parents/carers and explained to them what the consequences of breaking the rules should be.

Experience shows that the group will tend to come up with a sensible and working set of 'rules' and consequences.

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
- 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 a club event

Adults and children shall never be permitted to use the 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 Fencing.

Whilst it would always be against the wishes of everyone involved in Orkney Fencing Club, 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 intervention

If a situation presents **imminent or grave danger**, staff/volunteers may need to take immediate action, including physical intervention.

What is physical intervention?

The purpose of physical intervention is to take immediate control of a dangerous situation, in order to end or significantly reduce the risk of harm to the person and others around them. Physical intervention involves some form of physical contact and application of force to guide, restrict or prevent movement. This can include touching, guiding or escorting all the way up to holding, chemical or mechanical restraint and seclusion.

Any form of physical intervention must always be:

- Reasonable, necessary and proportionate
- Conducted by appropriately trained and competent staff
- Combined with strategies to continuously de-escalate
- The least restrictive possible
- For the minimum amount of time
- Continually monitored for signs of distress in the child
- Formally recorded as soon as possible after the event.

The use of physical interventions should always be avoided unless it is absolutely necessary 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 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.

CHAPTER 7

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 discussion and where appropriate, supervision and debriefing.

CHAPTER 8

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 Orkney Fencing Club it will be the responsibility of the **parents/carers** to satisfy themselves about the appropriateness and safety of the arrangements.

Where ***Orkney Fencing 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.**

Ideally staff/volunteers should avoid transporting children in their own car however it is acknowledged that in a sport such as fencing this may be impractical. When transporting children, wherever possible they should be in the back seat of the car with appropriate in car restraint (seatbelts) 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 protect 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.

CHAPTER 9

LATE 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 Orkney Fencing Club to transport children home on behalf of parents/carers who have been delayed.

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:

1. Make sure that all literature, application forms and consent forms are clear about starting and finishing times of sessions;

2. Be clear about the expectations of parents/carers not to drop children off too early and collect children promptly when sessions finish.
If appropriate (e.g. venue close to child's home ask parents/carers whether they give consent for children to go home unaccompanied (according to their age and stage).

3. Have a late collection telephone contact and number on registration form

4. Where possible make sure that there is more than one adult/leader to lock up at the end of a session.

5. Discuss and rehearse with members of staff/volunteers how to deal with being left alone with a child.

6. 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.*

7. 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 decide about whether to take the child home yourself (see point 6) or call the police (point 9)

8. 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 the Orkney Fencing Club Child Protection Officer and parents/carers as soon as possible.

9. If you are still concerned and have exhausted all other options call the police on 101.

CHAPTER 10

TRIPS AWAY FROM HOME (INVOLVING OVERNIGHT STAYS)
The following provides guidance for ensuring good practice when taking children and young people away from home.

1. **Designate a Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer for the Trip**
The Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer should confirm with the Team Manager that 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 home contact for Orkney Fencing Club and parents/carers. Even with a designate Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer ALL accompanying adults are responsible for ensuring the safety and well being of children and young people on the trip.

2. **Risk Assessment**: Any potential areas 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!

3. **Travel Arrangements**: Organisers must ensure there is adequate and relevant insurance cover as appropriate (including travel and medical insurance). Parents will be encouraged to obtain personal insurance for their child. 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 or differences in legislation in relation to health and safety or access.

4. **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. This will include membership of the PVG Scheme as required. Group leaders (who are not coaches) should be familiar with and agree to abide by (and sign) Orkney Fencing Club Child Protection Policy, Procedures and Code of Conduct.

5. **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

Other things to consider include environmental factors, personal safety issues
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.

6. **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.

7. **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 basic detail form with Parents/Carers 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 24/7 Home Contact in the first instance so that arrangements can be put in to place to support the child on hearing any distressing news.

8. **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) is not condoned at any point 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 well being 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.

9. **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.

CHAPTER 11

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ICT) AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Technology advances extremely quickly, meaning ways in which we communicate and receive and absorb information are changing all the time. This provides a fantastic opportunity for organisations to promote their activities and communicate easily with members. However, it can also put children and young people at considerable risk, which is why safeguards must be put in place.

Whether your organisation is considering setting up a social networking page or using email to inform young people about match or competition details, be aware that the following guidelines should be met:

1. Where possible, try to ensure that no one is excluded, e.g. young people who may not have access to a mobile phone/internet need to be to access relevant information in another format;

2. Ensure that written permission to contact children and young people via social media or mobile phone is sought from parents/carers for all children and young people under 18;

3. Ensure that the need for the technology is clearly identified and its use is specific;

4. Always ensure 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 given information on how to keep themselves safe online and who to report any concerns to in Orkney Fencing Club;

All concerns about the inappropriate use of technology will be dealt with in line with Orkney Fencing Club/Scottish Fencing/British Fencing Complaints Policy/Performance Management/ Disciplinary Procedure and/or Procedure for Responding to Concerns about a Child/Concerns About the Conduct of a Member of Staff or Volunteer. This may include the concerns being reported to the police. Further advice is available from the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) (see useful contacts).

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.

Text/email

Staff/volunteers must consider whether it is necessary to communicate with children and young people via text and email. The general principle is that all communications with children should be open, transparent and always copied to a parent/guardian

Good Practice
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 those under 18 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 in the interests of clarity Orkney Fencing Club recommends that consent is obtained for all those under 18.

For young people between 16 and 18 this may be done in discussion with the young person and their parent. This is particularly important as a coach is considered to be working in a position of trust.

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; Permission must be given from parents/guardians to store this
- The number of people with access to children and young people's details should be kept to a practical minimum.
- 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 is strongly discouraged.

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 websites or social networking sites and pages will be monitored.

In terms of publishing information and pictures the following good practice should be noted:

Permission: Written parent/carer consent should be obtained for all children and young people under 18 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, looked after child 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, school, email address, telephone number of a child. All contact must be directed to the organisation who uploaded the image e.g. Orkney Fencing Club.

Credit for achievements by a child should be restricted and provide minimal information e.g. Tracy was Player of the Year 2016. 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 normal fencing kit, 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 Orkney Fencing Club Child Protection Officer.

SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES:

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

Permission: Obtain written permission from parents/carers of under 18's 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 could also be incorporated into the organisation's Rules or Code of Conduct.
Set up an organisation profile rather than staff/volunteer profiles. This avoids access from members to individual's profiles.
Keep the organisation profile on "private" - allowing only members access to it (the organisation can monitor this and accept or decline requests to join).

Concerns: 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.

All social networking sites, internet sites need to be moderated by a designated member of the organisation to ensure concerns or misuse is dealt with quickly and appropriately

INTERNET FORUMS: There has been an increase in the use and abuse of internet forums to target individuals or to engage contributions in debates which can occasionally cause upset and embarrassment to children and young people. Forums 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.

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 transit 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.
Particular care is required in areas where personal privacy is important and expected e.g. changing rooms, bathrooms and sleeping quarters. No photographs or video footage should ever be permitted in such areas of personal privacy.

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 this guidance 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 leisure centres or areas to which the public have general rights of access. In these circumstances, organisers should take reasonable steps to promote the safe use of photographing and filming and to respond to any concerns raised.

Over the past few years there have been a number of different approaches to gain consent for photography at competitions and events from individual parents/guardians for each child.
This has been very challenging to implement therefore many sporting organisations have now included a section on all competition and event entry forms which specifically asks the parent/guardian to "opt out". Parents/Guardians are then expected to let organisers of the event or competition know that they do not want their child's photograph taken and all reasonable efforts will be taken to comply with this whilst acknowledging that their child may be in the background of other images taken.

This enables children who are perhaps looked after or where there are challenges in relation to for example domestic abuse and parental contact arrangements to be protected in light of changing circumstances.

An example of the wording agreed with Safeguarding in Sport (Children1st) is provided **in Appendix 3.**
This will be incorporated into any competition/training camp /registration form.

Orkney Fencing Club also gains consent at registration and asks parents/guardians to update the organisation with any changes.

CHAPTER 12

Risk Assessment

Everything we do has a risk associated with it. Fencing is no different to this. Carrying out a risk assessment allows us to consider risk and to think about whether is it possible or reasonable to do something about this. People have a right to be protected from harm which could be prevented. In order to create a safe environment, a club must carry out regular risk assessments.

A risk assessment is not about creating huge amounts of paperwork, but rather about identifying sensible measures to control the risks for your event or activity.

You are probably already taking steps to reduce risks and a risk assessment will ensure you have all areas covered.

There are 5 simple steps to risk assessment:

1. Identify the hazards

2. Decide who might be harmed and how

3. Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions

4. Record your findings

5.Review your assessment and update as necessary

A sample risk assessment has been provided on the following page to assist you in your own assessment.

Appendix 1

Risk Assessment Form

Introduction

This Risk Assessment has been drawn up prior to the commencement of any fencing activity and will be reviewed annually, or when a substantive change occurs in circumstances or practice.

It is essential that any Risk Management undertaken in this document be strictly adhered to. A copy will be signed, and retained, by each Club Coach.

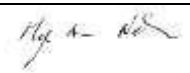
Where fencing activities are being provided for a third party such as a school or activity centre, it is recommended that coaches ensure that employers have seen and consent to the content of this form and that their signature is obtained.

It is the responsibility of the Employer to ensure that the coach is adequately qualified for the work undertaken and has current British Fencing Registration.

In the case of any accident, a copy of this form should be forwarded to the Scottish Fencing along with the accident report.

Nature of activity	Fencing
Venue	Pickaquoy Sports Centre Kirkwall Orkney
Date and recurrence	Amended 01/03/2019 for Wednesdays recurring club night and ad hoc seniors sessions
Group	Orkney Fencing Club
Anticipated number of participants	30 maximum

Age range of participants	10-75 years of age

Name of Coach/Leader	Moya Nelson
Signature of Coach/ Leader	
Email	moya.nelson23@gmail.com
Phone Number	01856751278
Date	01/03/2019
Name of Responsible Person	
I have read the Risk Assessment and agree to the contents	
Signature of Responsible Person	Date

(C) CONSEQUENCE
1 Slight
2 Minor
3 Serious
4 Major

(F) FREQUENCY
1 Negligible
2 Unlikely
3 Likely
4 Probable

HAZARD	*CAUSE/RISK*	*CONSEQUENCE*	*Who might be harmed*	*Before Control* (C) (F)	*How Risk is Controlled*	*Action by Whom*	*After Control* (C) (F)
Falling/slipping on floor	***Dirty/wet floor***	***Minor Injuries***	***All Persons***	***2 3***	***Ensure floor is swept clean prior to activity commencing***	*Sports centre staff, checked by Coach prior to session starting*	***2 2***

Falling over equipment	***Fencing bags, equipment etc left lying on the floor***	***Minor Injuries***	***All Persons***	***3 3***	***All equipment to be kept in designated storage areas. Floor area to be kept clear of personal possessions.***	*All OFC members, coaches and coaching assistants*	***3 1***
Electrocution	***Faulty electrical equipment. Mains operated scoring equipment is sometimes used.***	***Death/Serious Injury***	***All Persons***	***4 3***	***Ensure equipment is regularly tested by a competent person. Ensure equipment is set-up and used correctly.***	*Coach and armourer and all fencers to notify of any concerns*	***4 2***
Penetration with blades	***Broken/ damaged blades***	***Death/Serious Injury***	***Fencers***	***4 4***	***Inspect weapons and clothing regularly. Ensure adequate supervision and training is provided***	*Coaches, coaching assistants and all fencers*	***4 2***
Personal Protection Equipment	***Personal Harm/ Injury***	***Major Injury***	***Fencers***	***3 3***	***Ensure adequate (correctly fitting) protective clothing is worn and used correctly. Ensure all clothing and weapons are checked regularly for damage.***	*Coach and armourer and all fencers to notify of any concerns*	***2 2***
COSHH	***Personal Harm/ Harm to others from materials***	***Major Injury***	***All Persons***	***3 3***	***Ensure that all substances covered by the COSHH regulations are stored and used appropriately by the appropriate authorised persons.***	*Coach*	***3 2***

Impact with Fencers/ spectators/weapons etc	***Personal Harm / Injury***	***Major Injury***	***All Persons***	***3 3***	***Ensure that the fencing area is clearly marked. Provide safe routes for spectators, members of the public, non-fencing members to move about. Ensure that only authorised persons are allowed close to the fencing area. Fencers to wear masks before picking up weapons.***	*Coach, fencers refereeing sparring and all fencers*	***3 2***
Dangerous Fencing	***Personal Harm/ Injury***	***Major Injury***	***All Persons***	***3 3***	***Ensure adequate supervision is provided at all times. Never leave classes/ individuals unsupervised. Provide adequate technical training. Provide safety instructions/ briefings prior to the activity commencing.***	*Coach, coaching assistants and all fencers*	***3 2***
Late Child pick -up	***Stress / potential physical injury if allowed to travel home unaccompanied***	***Potentially Major injury***	***Junior fencers***	***3 2***	***Ensure all Club responsible persons have parent / guardian contact details. Arrange with parent / guardian that in the event they cannot be reached, it is permissible for Club responsible person can accompany child home.***	***Coaches, coaching assistants and Club Welfare representatives***	***1 2***

Definitions applied in this Document

Slight – slight injuries, cuts, bruises etc. No absence from work
Minor – Minor injuries, where people are off work for periods not in excess of 3 days. Serious –
Injuries where people are off work for periods in excess of 3 days.
Major – Death or Major injury as defined in 'Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 1995 Frequency:
Negligible – unlikely that harm will occur
Unlikely – where harm will seldom occur
Likely – where harm will occur frequently
Probable – where it is certain that harm will occur

Appendix 2

Incident Reporting Form

This form should be used when a child, young person or vulnerable adult discloses something to someone in the club that they or another young person is suffering or is at risk of abuse.

It can be helpful to complete this form as soon as possible after any disclosure but don't let this delay any action you need to take. Remember ***Recognise, Respond, Record!***

Once this form is completed it should be marked **Strictly Confidential** and forwarded to: Scottish Fencing, 1 Redheughs Rigg, South Gyle, Edinburgh EH12 9DQ

You can also email as an attachment (marked Confidential) to Admin@scottish-fencing.com

Do's and Don'ts

Do:

- Allow the pace of the conversation to be dictated by them
- If you have to ask questions then limit them to "neutral" questions such as "can you tell me what happened?"
- Accept what they have told you and do not ask for further detail
- Acknowledge how hard it was for them to tell you
- Reassure them that they have done the right thing
- Explain that you will have to tell the Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer and why

Don't:

- Burden them with guilt by asking questions such as "why didn't you tell me before?"
- Interrogate or pressure them to provide information
- Ask any questions that start with the words how, what, when, where and why
- Undress them to examine clothed parts of their body
- Criticise the perpetrator
- Promise confidentiality or make promises that you can't keep such as it will be alright now"

Incident Reporting Form

1. You

   Your name .....

   Position in club .....

   Date of incident .....

2. The Child, Young Person or Vulnerable Adult

   Name .....

   Date of Birth .....

   Parent/Carer .....

3. The Alleged Perpetrator
   If they have named or described an alleged perpetrator, note the details here:

   .....

   .....

4. The Disclosure
   Record of conversation (use continuation sheet if necessary):

- Record what was said by them and by you
- Use exact words and phrases that they used
- Clearly distinguish between fact, observation, allegation and opinion
- Note the non-verbal behaviour and key words in the language that they used

   .....

   .....

   .....

   .....

   .....

Did they name any witnesses? If so, note them here

.....

.....

Was anyone else present during the disclosure? If so, note them here

.....

.....

5. Consent to share
   Were they able to provide informed consent Yes No

   If so how did you seek consent?

- Specifically, what did you explain, what questions did you ask and what were the responses?

.....

.....

Did they provide consent to share? Yes No
If yes, what did they say?

- Note their exact words

.....

.....

If no, did you explain that you would have to share this information with the Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer and who else might receive this information and why? Yes No

If yes, what did they say?

.....

.....

6. Additional Information
   Any other comments

   .....

   .....

   .....

   Signed .....

   Time & date .....

Once completed this form is CONFIDENTIAL and access should be restricted.
This MUST be stored securely

Appendix 3

SAMPLE WORDING FOR ENTRY FORM/REGISTRATION FORM RE PHOTOGRAPHY/VIDEO

It can be extremely helpful to discuss photography and video use at registration at club level. This should then be repeated at competition entry using the same wording to ensure that any change in a child/adult's circumstances that would have relevance in relation to photography is considered.

Photography

Orkney Fencing Club aims to support participation in a safe and fun environment. During this event people may take photographs and/or videos. These may be for personal use by parents or as an aid to coaching. Orkney Fencing Club takes any inappropriate use of photographs or imagery seriously. Please indicate below which statement you agree to. **Please choose one option only**.

1: I am happy for photographs/videos to be taken of my child during this event and used in local and national publicity, communications, publications or digital channels (such as websites, social media)

OR

2: I do not wish photographs/videos to be taken of my child during this event and used in local and national publicity, communications, publications or digital channels (such as websites, social media). I understand that it is my responsibility to ensure that the DT at this event are aware of my preference. I understand that at large scale events it may be difficult to ensure that my child is not in the background of the photograph/video.

Appendix 4

Useful contacts

- Useful contacts ChildLine 0800 1111 / www.childline.org.uk
- Respectme: http://www.respectme.org.uk
- Kidscape www.kidscape.org.uk
- Anti-Bullying Alliance www.antibullyingalliance.org
- Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre/ CEOP https://ceop.police.uk/
- https://www.children1st.org.uk/help-and-advice/concerned-about-a-child/