



Nottingham Croquet Club Safeguarding Policy

Based on a model provided by the Croquet Association, adopted June 2015.

Reviewed and updated March 2021

Every club member has a responsibility for safe-guarding vulnerable people while they are on club premises and any concerns, however small, should be brought to the attention of the safe-guarding officer.

The Welfare Officer for Nottingham Croquet Club is Omied Hallam. His contact details are available on the notice board in the pavilion, in the club handbook, from any committee member, and on the CA database.

1. Definitions

Children are defined as *persons of less than 18 years of age*. Adults are legally defined as vulnerable only if they are receiving health or personal care, but this club recognises that anyone can be subject to abuse and thus this policy should be read with adults as well as children in mind.

2. Policy Statement

- The child's or vulnerable adult's welfare is paramount and this club is committed to provide a safe place for children and vulnerable adults to enjoy playing croquet.
- All children and vulnerable adults have the right to protection from abuse.
- All suspicions and allegations of inappropriate behaviour will be dealt with.
- Children attending the club must be accompanied by a Parent/Guardian, or by a School Teacher or Group Leader in the case of groups. For children aged 14 or above who are members of the club, this restriction may be waived by written agreement between a Parent/Guardian and one of its officers.
- Members should not put themselves in the position of being alone with a young person or vulnerable adult but should ensure that they are always in the open or within sight or hearing of other adults.
- Physical contact, "horseplay", taunting, suggestive comments or other potentially inappropriate behaviour should be avoided. If members observe this type of behaviour between members of a group of children it should be mentioned to the group leader.
- All members should make themselves familiar with this Safeguarding Policy and are reminded that if a child or vulnerable adult reports an incidence of abuse to a member, the member should ensure that the conversation is only continued in an area within sight of others, that he/she never gives a promise of secrecy, and that he/she ensures they pass on concerns to the club safeguarding officer.

3. Recognising abuse

This section explains briefly what abuse is, how to recognise it, and what to do.

3.1 What is abuse?

Abuse is a term used to describe ways in which children or vulnerable adults are harmed, usually by other adults, and includes physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, mental abuse, and bullying.

3.1.1 Physical abuse

Physical abuse occurs where adults or other children:

- Physically hurt or injure children
- Give children noxious substances (e.g. alcohol/drugs)

3.1.2 Neglect

Neglect includes situations in which adults:

- Consistently leave children or vulnerable adults unsupervised
- Fail to ensure children and vulnerable adults are safe or expose them to unnecessary risk of injury

3.1.3 Sexual abuse

Children and vulnerable adults are sexually abused when adults or children use them to meet their own sexual needs. Examples:

- Unlawful intercourse
- Inappropriate touching
- Taking pornographic photographs

3.1.4 Mental Abuse

When children or vulnerable adults are:

- Taunted or unnecessarily shouted at
- Subjected to undue criticism
- Put under unreasonable pressure to perform

3.1.5 Bullying

May be carried out by adults or by other children:

- Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour usually repeated over a period of time
- Any child or vulnerable adults can be a victim of bullying
- More usual victims are shy, sensitive, anxious and insecure

4. How to recognise if a child or vulnerable adult is being abused

It is not always easy to spot when children or vulnerable adults have been abused. However, typical symptoms would include:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries
- Sexually explicit language or actions
- A sudden change in behaviour
- The child or vulnerable adults describes an abusive act
- The child or vulnerable adults has a general distrust and avoidance of adults
- An unreasonable reaction to normal physical contact

Although a child or vulnerable adults may be displaying some or all of these signs, it does not necessarily mean he/she is being abused.

5. Scrutiny of Members

Members who frequently (once a week or more often), intensively (on 4 or more days in a 30 day period), teach children would be engaging in "regulated activity" and the club is required to check that they are not barred from doing so. This club requires such members to undergo an enhanced DBS check which it will arrange through the Croquet Association.

6. Prevention of Abuse

This section offers advice aimed at protecting children from abuse and members from false allegations.

The club will point out to parents of under-18s who take part in club activities that the club will take every possible care of children but they cannot be deemed to be *in loco parentis* in respect of children using club facilities. The exception to this will be if the young person is a member of a club team playing in an away match or tournament and the required permission form has been signed by the parent or guardian.

6.1 Good practice guide

Opportunities for abuse can be minimised, and members can be protected against allegations, by the use of good practice.

- Except for essential training purposes, or in exceptional cases to treat or prevent injury, minimise time spent alone with children or vulnerable adults
- Do not take children or vulnerable adults alone in a car
- Do not take children or vulnerable adults to your home
- Where these situations are unavoidable ensure they only occur with the authority of the child's parents or vulnerable adults carer or a responsible person within the club

6.2 You should never

- Allow children or vulnerable adults to use inappropriate language although it is recognised that with some medical conditions this could be difficult
- Make suggestive comments to a child or vulnerable adults
- Fail to act upon allegations made by a child or vulnerable adults
- Do things of a personal nature for children or vulnerable adults
- Engage in physical or sexually provocative games
- Engage in inappropriate touching

7. What to do if there are Allegations of Abuse

Where there is an allegation of abuse against a member, there may be three types of investigation:

- A criminal investigation (police)
- A safeguarding investigation (social services)
- A disciplinary or misconduct investigation (club/CA)

7.1 Action if a child or vulnerable adults complains he/she is being abused

7.1.1 Always

- Stay calm - ensure the child or vulnerable adults is safe and feels secure
- Tell the child or vulnerable adults you are taking the complaint seriously
- Be honest; explain you will have to tell somebody else, emphasising that this will be on a need to know basis
- Document what the child or vulnerable adults has said as soon as possible – handwritten accounts should be made. In the event that these are subsequently typed up ALWAYS keep the original handwritten copy with it. An incident book and report forms are provided in the first aid box.

7.1.2 Never

- Rush into actions
- Make promises you cannot keep
- Ask inappropriate questions
- Take sole responsibility

7.1.3 Why should I intervene?

- Taking the correct action about abuse is never easy
- You may be upset about what the child or vulnerable adults has said or you may worry about the consequences of your actions
- One thing is certain: you cannot ignore abuse
- The effects of abuse on children and vulnerable adults can be devastating

7.1.4 Recording information

- Record basic information (see point 7.1.1 **Always** above)
- Do not start an investigation
- Remember that unnecessary interviews with a child or vulnerable adults may prejudice a police enquiry
- Consider environment carefully if recording information
- Ensure another adult is present
- Avoid touching the child or vulnerable adults

7.1.5 Who to inform

If any form of abuse is observed, suspected or reported to a member it must be acted upon. An incident report form should be filled in and the Club's Welfare Officer informed at the earliest opportunity. The Officer will then report the incident to the Club Chairman and together they will decide on the appropriate course of action – which maybe to involve Police, Social Services, NSPCC, and/or the Croquet Association.

8. Written Parental/Guardian Consent

Where a child is to take part in an away match or event, a written parental consent form should be obtained. Likewise, if photographs are to be taken for training purposes or publication the parent/guardian's permission must be obtained and no addresses, emails or telephone numbers must be publicised.

9. Croquet Association National Safeguarding Officer

The CA's national officer with responsibility for safeguarding is Dr. Ron Carter MBChB, 4 Wolverton Gardens, Ealing, London W5 3LJ. Mobile No. 07973 239319

10. Remember:

Every club member has a responsibility for safe-guarding vulnerable people while they are on club premises and any concerns, however small, should be brought to the attention of the safe-guarding officer.

The Welfare Officer for Nottingham Croquet Club is Omied Hallam. His contact details are available on the notice board in the pavilion, in the club handbook, from any committee member, and on the CA database.