

Welsh Amateur Boxing Association

Safeguarding Policy



WelshBoxing

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For Review: September 2024

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FOREWORD

The Board of Directors is committed to ensuring that the appropriate safeguards and cultures are developed throughout our sport to ensure that the community will flourish.

The welfare of Athletes is of paramount importance to Welsh Boxing. The development of the sport relies on boxing being a safe, encouraging and enjoyable environment for children, young people and adults.

Everyone within our sport is responsible for ensuring that the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults is prioritised, so that every child, young athlete or vulnerable adult has the opportunity to train and box within a positive environment and fulfil their true potential.

All of Welsh Boxing's coaching, officiating and team management courses cover the principles set out within this policy. This guarantees that the sport, as a whole, develops an understanding of the importance of safeguarding issues and ensures that those at the heart of the sport are aware of the pathways of help and advice if a safeguarding concern is raised.

If a safeguarding concern is raised, qualified individuals within Welsh Boxing act immediately to assess any concerns and when appropriate work closely with statutory agencies and the police, to ensure children, young people and vulnerable adults are protected from harm. We have robust procedures in place to effectively deal with safeguarding concerns.

Safeguarding in sport is a developing and evolving area where today's 'best practice' is unlikely to remain unaffected by ongoing experience, debate, study and research. The promotion of better safeguarding practice is both good for the sport and the children that are drawn to it, by its challenges, variety and timeless appeal.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

WELSH BOXING



OUR MESSAGE

The overriding objective of this policy is to ensure that the welfare of all children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in our sport is protected. All children, young people and adults should be valued and treated with equality and fairness, regardless of their age, culture, disability, ability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief or sexual identity. It is the responsibility of every adult involved in boxing to ensure that every child and young person can participate in the sport in a safe and friendly environment. These overriding principles are achieved through;

Education

Welsh Boxing prides itself on educating its employees, athletes, coaches, officials, club officers, members and volunteers about the importance of safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. This policy has been made accessible to all through its online publication. Boxing Clubs are also encouraged to actively display copies of this policy and educate their members on its contents. Adherence to this policy and Welsh Boxing's safeguarding procedures is mandatory for all staff, coaches, officials, club officers, members and volunteers within Welsh Boxing.

Training and development

Welsh Boxing works hard to provide courses and training for our coaches, members and volunteers.

Prevention and precaution

This policy seeks to assist those working with children in the boxing environment to identify areas of risks. The policy cannot cover all types of risks but outlines some of the key areas members, staff and volunteers should be aware of. In terms of identifying individuals who may pose a risk to children and vulnerable adults Welsh Boxing conducts rigorous checks through the Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) the procedure for this is set out in Welsh Boxing's Safeguarding Procedures, which are available on our website.

Recognise and refer

It is vital that everyone working with children and young people throughout Welsh Boxing knows how to recognise the safeguarding issues and when there is evidence of a breach of this policy in respect of a child or vulnerable adult. The first and immediate step to take is to refer the matter to your club welfare officer.

Safeguarding Principles

NEEDS OF THE CHILD

Every child is unique, and a child and young person's boxing experience should be tailored to his/her individual need

INTEGRITY OF RELATIONSHIPS

Children should be treated with integrity and respect. The relationship between carer and child athlete must at all times be one of openness and respect.

PRESERVING CHILDHOOD

The importance of preserving childhood should be understood and embraced at all levels within boxing.

SPORTSMANSHIP

Boxing for children and young people should be conducted in a safe, positive and encouraging atmosphere. Children and young people should be taught the principle of sportsmanship.

FAIR PLAY

The incorporates not only playing within the rules of the sport but also encompasses the concepts of friendship, respect for others and always playing within the right spirit.

RECOGNISING RISK

It is not possible to identify all risks to children and young people within the Boxing environment, however, below is a non-exhaustive list of issues which Welsh Boxing is concerned to identify and eradicate;

Bullying

Bullying can be physical, emotional or verbal. It can take place anywhere and may involve a child bullying another child or an adult displaying bullying behaviours. Bullying can cause considerable stress to children and young people, in some cases affecting their health and development. Bullying in boxing may consist athletes being pushed too hard by their coaches or parents, a child being intimidated or discriminated by others, physical abuse or threats or bullying via social media. For further information on bullying or what to do if an issue arises please make reference to the Safeguarding Policies and Procedures section of the Welsh Boxing website.

Inappropriate training

This is a form of abuse and involves any activity in which an adult forces or encourages physical training at a level which is too intense and fatiguing for a child or young person. In boxing, this can take many forms including too frequent, hard competitive sparring, endurance or stamina training; such as over-long runs, or distance runs at a pace that causes extreme fatigue and distress. There is the risk of over exertion during gym work, which could involve inappropriate levels of training in excess of a child's natural capacity, or with a frequency that is inappropriate for their age and physical development.

Mismatching opponents

Guidance within the rules for the matching of children and young people is extensive. It should be noted that such infringements of these rules can on many occasions constitute abuse and shall be dealt with under this Policy and through disciplinary procedures.

Favouritism

It is tempting to lavish praise and attention on young athletes who appear to be developing quickly and showing talent. It is wrong however to do this in a way that undermines other athletes in the group or makes anyone feel inferior. It is important to give proportionate attention to all children and young people under the control and supervision of an adult.

Placing unrealistic expectations of success on a child or young person

Each child or young person has their natural ability which can be developed by training and coaching. However, any adult with responsibility in this area should be aware of their limitations and be realistic about the goals that a child or young person should be set.

Drugs and doping

Exposure of a child or young person to drug taking or doping is a serious abuse of a child or young person and a significant Safeguarding issue. By 'exposure' we do not mean to limit the problem to use, administration or trafficking in drugs but to include any situation where, through neglect by an adult, a child or young person comes into contact with any drug taking or doping practice, or is subjected to influence or pressure to participate in drug taking or doping, or sees or experiences 'recreational' drug use. This risk to children and young people is insidious and particular vigilance is required to identify children and young people at risk.

Children with disabilities

Studies suggest children with disabilities are at increased risk of abuse. Various factors contribute to this, such as; stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, isolation and a powerlessness to protect themselves or adequately communicate that abuse has occurred.

Physical abuse

It is never acceptable to physically assault a child or young person. Certain forms of physical contact such as restraint might be justified for the child's safety. Physical contact for the purpose of coaching and instruction is obviously permissible but care needs to be taken. Physical occurs where someone physically hurts or injures a child or young person. This can occur in a number of ways including hitting, shaking, throwing, burning, biting and giving alcohol, drugs or poisons.

Sexual Abuse

This includes any form of physical contact with a view to sexual gratification or sexual activity, however minor, both upon or towards a child or young person. Sexual abuse arises wherever an adult uses a child for sexual gratification however it is done.

This is where a child or young person is used by another person (which may be an adult or child and may be male or female) for their own sexual gratification. This includes a far wider range of conduct than intercourse or oral sex and includes any conduct which is engaged in with a child or young person for sexual gratification.

Neglect

If a child or young person is placed under the care and supervision of an adult, it is that adult's duty to attend to that child or young person's welfare and not to neglect the child even if there are competing pressures on the supervising adult's time and attention.

In boxing this can include anyone who is charged with the responsibility of care for a child or young person during 'away from home' tournaments and who fails to adequately supervise them in so much as they misuse alcohol, drugs or participate in sexual activities.

This occurs where an adult fails to meet a child's basic physical and / or psychological needs. This could include failure to dress a child properly, or to provide adequate food or shelter.

Video and film

The filming of children must be controlled and only carried out for a proper purpose and with the correct authority – in boxing authority is granted by those who issue tournament permits. Such activity should never be carried out within changing rooms, even under permit. For more information, see the parental consent form for photography, which is available on the Welsh Boxing website.

All professional photographers must be correctly registered with WABA and be in possession of a current Welsh Boxing Photographic License – at a tournament, it is the Official in Charge's responsibility to ensure this clause is adhered to.

Video recording is acknowledged as a legitimate coaching aid. However, if it is to be used you should ensure that written parental consent has been obtained. Such films must be stored securely and handed to the child or parent or destroyed once their use is no longer justified.

The over-riding principle is that any behaviour that threatens the welfare of a child or young person is prohibited and requires reporting and possible action. The participation of children and young people in the sport of boxing should be enjoyable and safe. Any behaviour that affects these goals amounts to a safeguarding issue. As well as identifying and eliminating safeguarding threats arising from a child's participation in the sport, all responsible adults should be aware of indicators of abuse that may be taking place away from the sport, for instance at home or school. We set out below, under broad headings, areas of abuse that can take place within and outside the sport. As with all the examples given, they are a guide only and highlight to all responsible adults the areas of risk that give rise to concern:

Welsh Boxing has produced the following best practice guides which can be located on the Policies and Procedures section of the Welsh Boxing website:

TRANSPORTING CHILDREN OR YOUNG PERSONS

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO MANAGING CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR

BULLYING



RESPONDING TO CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD

If you have a safeguarding concern about a child or young athlete, if it concerns a Welsh Boxing member, or takes place in the boxing environment, the concern must be reported immediately to an Welsh Boxing recognised welfare officer. In certain cases, where the concern is grave, you may consider contacting the police or the NSPCC.

While it is not the responsibility of Welsh Boxing staff or volunteers to decide whether or not abuse has taken place, it is their responsibility to pass on concerns to the appropriate authorities who will make this decision.

Disclosures made by a child

Occasionally a child may disclose abuse themselves directly to an adult they trust. Where this does happen, the following should be considered:

- Do not pre-judge what you are told and never say that you do not believe what the child or young person says.
- Tell the child or young person that telling you is the correct thing to do.
- Tell the child or young person that they are not to blame.
- Do not under any circumstance continue to question the child or young person beyond confirming what they have said.
- Do not make promises to the child or young person that you cannot keep, for example - promising absolute confidentiality, as any disclosure will be referred on and other appropriate agencies may be involved.
- Do not take action against anyone mentioned in such disclosures and never against an alleged perpetrator.
- Take the child's name, date of birth and address.
- If appropriate, take details of bruising or other injuries.
- In cases of immediate danger or threat, the emergency services should be called. Consideration should also be given as to whether the NSPCC should be called.
- In normal circumstances the referral to an outside agency will be carried out by the Welsh Boxing Office Lead, however, in cases of emergency and in liaison with either the welfare officer and/or the Office Lead, the club welfare officer must contact the relevant agency (police/children's social care services, etc.) This action should be treated as 'immediate'.
- In all circumstances for avoidance of doubt guidance should always be sought from the Office Lead.

WHISTLE BLOWING

Any concerns for the welfare of any child arising from the abuse or harassment by a coach, volunteer or child / young person should be reported immediately. The welfare of the child must always be of paramount importance and, you should ensure someone takes immediate steps to remove the child or young person from a position of harm or potential harm.

If as a member of staff, a coach or other volunteer, you become aware that a member of staff, a coach or other volunteer has or may abuse a child/children, you MUST inform an appropriate person, in confidence if necessary. That person could be a club welfare officer or the Office Lead. All information received and discussed will be treated in confidence and only shared with those individuals within Welsh Boxing who will be able to manage and resolve the situation. In urgent and serious cases, you MUST contact the police, the children's social care services or the NSPCC. All these agencies are experienced in such matters and you can be confident that the concerns will be addressed in a professional way.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING

Confidentiality should be paramount when dealing with safeguarding matters. Every effort will be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis.

The management of confidential information is an important element of the work of Welsh Boxing. Such information should be handled in a professional, sensitive and respectful way.

Disclosure of information should be on a 'need to know' basis and delivered in a sensitive and careful way.

No guarantees of confidentiality can be made as the welfare of the child supersedes all other considerations.

In cases of doubt as to the veracity of a disclosure and whether the disclosure is poor practice or child abuse, the Office Lead should be consulted in the first instance.

Anonymous complaints while notoriously difficult to deal should not be ignored. Regardless of whether such complaints refer to a member of the club/organisation (either victim or accused) the matter must be reported to the Office Lead. This type of allegation should be addressed immediately and confidentially and dealt with appropriately if abuse or poor practice is discovered.

Adults at Risk Policy

Welsh Boxing is committed to safeguarding adults at risk. An adult at risk is defined as someone aged 18 or over who:

- Is unable to protect him/herself from significant harm or exploitation.
- Is, or may be, in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, increasing frailty or illness, alcohol or drug dependency.
- Is, or may be, unable to take care of him or herself (includes drug or alcohol dependency).

Relationship to Child Welfare procedures:

- There is no specific 'adults at risk act' giving clear legislative guidelines.
- The definition of 'adult at risk' is open to interpretation and the adult at risk may apply only at times.
- Adults have a right to self-determination. They may not wish for intervention to safeguard them.
- Adults may consent to sexual activities and the issue of consent may affect the reporting and management of allegations.
- Local authorities may vary in dealing with referrals as there is not a consistent approach.

Whilst it is hoped that proactive preventative work and providing clear policies is sufficient to safeguard all persons within Welsh Boxing, the organisation recognises that it has a responsibility to safeguard vulnerable adults from abuse and harm and respond where abuse and harm are perceived to have occurred.

The responsibility taken by this Policy is to:

- Safeguard the welfare of adults at risk in boxing by protecting them from any significant physical, sexual and emotional harm and from neglect, bullying and financial harm within the sport. This may include training and codes of practice amongst other strategies for reducing risk.
- Safeguard the welfare of adults at risk in boxing by making use of such vetting as is available to Welsh Boxing when seeking to establish suitability for a new or pre-existing role with adults at risk in boxing.
- Report to the appropriate authorities any concerns about abuse or harm to adults at risk whether this occurs within the sport or elsewhere and whether this be a criminal offence or other concern. The appropriate authorities may be internal or external to the sport. This will include identifying reporting frameworks and developing guidelines for reporting.
- Ensure appropriate investigations and responses to concerns about abuse or harm within the sport including boxing sanctions as appropriate. This will include work in partnership with the police and other statutory agencies charged with investigating and responding and with the vulnerable adult who is believed to be at risk or believed to have been harmed.
- Following such investigations, act to put appropriate safeguards in place to safeguard the vulnerable adult in the future and to reduce the risk of harm to other adults at risk in the sport.
- Report when appropriate to the Independent Safeguarding Authority anybody in the sport who is believed by Welsh Boxing to be a risk of harm to adults at risk.

- Seek to develop internal skills and knowledge based on research, government guidance and learning from experience.
- Review the policy from time to time.

Types of abuse

- Physical
- Sexual
- Psychological
- Financial
- Neglect
- Discriminatory
- Bullying

In one situation there may be obvious signs and symptoms of abuse, but in others the indicators may be more discrete and difficult to detect. Combinations of factors which individually might not give cause for concern could be more so when considered together. The abuse may be committed by one individual against another or be institutional in that the whole organisation colludes in abusive practices through ignorance or choice.

Abuse behaviour can be assessed on a scale from poor practice to bad practice to abuse. Abuse cannot be easily measured as an action alone. Its severity will partly be defined by the following:

- Vulnerability of the victim and the power differential;
- Nature and extent of the abuse;
- Length of time it has been occurring;
- Impact on the individual or group;
- Risk of it being repeated or becoming increasingly serious.

Some people who have been abused appear able to speak about it and wish action to be taken. Others seem very reluctant to talk about the experience. There may be several reasons for this:

- Too painful and emotional to talk about. Feelings of shame or embarrassment;
- There may not be the opportunity to see a trusted person in private;
- There may be anxiety about repercussions from the perpetrator or others;
- A worry about where will it end; for example if the police are involved, or perhaps a fear of going to court;
- The victim is just willing to put up with it;
- Communication or language;
- Failure to recognise that an experience is abusive.

Action

Establish the victim's wishes

It is important that you do not investigate the concerns, but the following guidance should be followed:

- Where there is no emergency, there is an opportunity to check out the victim's wishes to the concern;
- Establish who the victim would most like to talk to about the matter;
- Liaise with a welfare officer;

- The person to whom the victim wishes to speak should familiarise themselves with all possible options and the potential consequences of each;
- Remember that the talk is to establish what the victim wants to do about the concern to talk about the incident itself;
- The victim needs time to consider the options and, if necessary, agree to meet again.

Reporting

Do not wait until you have all the information. If the person is injured or not yet safe, take immediate steps to help them.

Tell the person what you are going to do about the concern. Inform the welfare officer or, where appropriate, the police or local authority. Only tell people who need to know.

Make sure that you write everything down as soon as possible, including observations made before, during or after a disclosure.

Preservation of evidence

It is important to have an awareness of preservation of any evidence available.

Welfare officer's role:

- Check that urgent action has been taken to ensure safety.
- Consider preservation of evidence and whether police have been informed.
- Gather all relevant information, including written accounts where possible, and check whether adult is known to lack capacity.
- Check whether consent has been obtained from the victim and refer the matter.
- Consult with the victim's key carer or equivalent, or identify the best person to speak to victim to establish wishes in respect of referral.
- Either refer or record reasons for not referring.

Note that referrals need to be made with or without consent if:

- Other people or children could be at risk from the person causing harm.
- It is necessary to prevent crime.
- Where there is a high risk to the health and safety of the adult at risk.
- The person lacks capacity to consent.

Any grievance or discipline matters will be dealt with according to Welsh Boxing discipline procedures.

Following a risk assessment, if Welsh Boxing is satisfied on the balance of probabilities that a member poses - or may pose - a risk of harm to an adult at risk, a suspension may be implemented.

Capacity

The Mental Capacity Act 2005, covering England and Wales, provides a statutory framework for people who lack capacity to make decisions for themselves, or who have capacity and want to make preparations for a time when they may lack capacity in the future. It sets out who can take decisions, in which situations, and how they should go about this.

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 affects people who can't make decisions for themselves, perhaps because of:

- a learning disability;
- dementia;
- a mental health problem;
- a head injury or a stroke;
- a drug, alcohol or substance addiction; or
- an acute illness, or the treatment for it.

All major decisions where a person lacks mental capacity are covered by the Act, from how their finances are managed to whether or not they have medical treatment.

The 5 principles of the Mental Capacity Act

1. A person must be assumed to have capacity unless it is established that they lack capacity.
2. A person is not to be treated as unable to make a decision unless all practicable steps to help him to do so have been taken without success.
3. A person is not to be treated as unable to make a decision merely because he makes an unwise decision.
4. An act done, or decision made, under this Act for or on behalf of a person who lacks capacity must be done, or made, in his best interests.
5. Before the act is done, or the decision is made, regard must be had to whether the purpose for which it is needed can be as effectively achieved in a way that is less restrictive of the person's rights and freedom of action.

Decision making

If a person has been assessed as lacking capacity then any action taken, or any decision made for or on behalf of that person, must be made in his or her best interests (principle 4). The person who has to make the decision is known as the 'decision-maker' and normally will be the carer responsible for the day-to-day care, or a professional such as a doctor, nurse or social worker where decisions about treatment, care arrangements or accommodation need to be made.

USEFUL CONTACT INFORMATION

The following non-exhaustive list of websites and contact telephone numbers which may be useful:

WELSH BOXING: Office Lead – 02920 334929

NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000

NSPCC Tel: 02920334975

Email: CPSU@nspcc.org.uk

Address: Child Protection in Sport Unit Wales

NSPCC Cymru/Wales

Diane Engelhardt House

Treglown Court

Dowlais Road

Cardiff

CF24 5LQ

Sports coach UK (for information on local courses including Safeguarding) sports coach UK, Chelsea Close, off Amberley Road, Armley, Leeds LS12 4HP Tel: 0113 274 4802 www.sportscoachuk.org

Disclosure and Barring Service

DBS customer services

PO Box 3961 Wootton Bassett SN4 4HF

03000 200 190 www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service

Childline Studd Street, London N1 0QV

Tel: 0800 1111

www.childline.org.uk

Data Protection www.legislation.gov.uk

IF YOU ARE NOT SURE WHAT TO DO

Advice can be obtained by telephoning the NSPCC helpline on: 0800 800500 or

Contact Welsh Boxing on 02920 334929