



CHILD SAFETY POLICY

Policy Statement

The Otago Hockey Association (OHA) is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children in its care. We recognise the responsibility to promote safe practice and to protect children from harm and exploitation while participating in our activities.

For the purposes of this policy and associated procedures, a child is recognised as someone under the age of 18 years. In implementing this policy, we are committed to the following principles:

1. The welfare of children is the primary concern.
2. All children, no matter their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, socio-economic status, religious belief and or sexual identity have the right to protection from all forms of harm.
3. Child protection is everyone's responsibility.

The welfare of children is paramount, any misconduct will not be tolerated at OHA, and any complaint will be handled appropriately, fairly and promptly. We encourage you to speak up if you experience or witness behaviour that you consider may breach this policy.

Purpose

The aim of this policy is to promote good practice through:

1. Promoting the health and welfare of children by providing opportunities for them to take part in sport safely.
2. Respecting and promoting the rights, wishes and feelings of children.
3. Promoting and implementing appropriate procedures to safeguard the wellbeing of children and protect them from harm.
4. Supporting staff, members and volunteers to adopt best practice to safeguard the wellbeing of children and protect them from harm.
5. Responding to any allegations of misconduct or harm to children.
6. Implementing the relevant investigative disciplinary and appeals procedures.

Scope

This Policy applies to OHA personnel (including employees, contractors, players, officials,

coaches and managers).

Types of harm

Outlined below are the types of harm that may exist.

Physical injury caused by:

- Environmental conditions
- Unsafe equipment and/or facilities
- Poor technique
- Violent or aggressive behaviour

Social, emotional and cultural:

- Emotional harm occurs when a child's self-esteem is undermined.
- Social harm occurs when the relationship that children have with other children or adults is damaged.
- Cultural harm occurs when a child's beliefs or practices are not acknowledged or accepted.

Sexual

- Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities (penetrative or non-penetrative) for example rape, kissing, touching, masturbation as well as non-contact acts such as involving children in the looking at or production of sexual images, sexual activities and sexual behaviours.

Neglect

- Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and or psychological needs, causing long term serious harm to the child's health or development. It may also include neglect of a child's basic or emotional needs. Neglect is a lack of action, emotion or basic needs.

Guidelines for conduct when working with children

All OHA personnel (including employees, contractors, players, officials, coaches and managers) are required to undertake a safety check such as Police Check, as required by the Vulnerable Children Act 2014.

These protocols provide guidance to those working with children by outlining good practice and establishing boundaries in a range of situations. The aim of these protocols is to reduce the likelihood of harm to a child as well as minimising the risk of an allegation or complaint being made.

Applying a child-centred approach where all children are treated equally and with dignity.

- Activities should be appropriate for the age and development of the children in your care.
- Ensure feedback to children is about their performance and not of a personal nature.
- Use positive and age-appropriate language when talking to children and when in their presence.

Creating a safe and open working environment that also reduces risk to staff and volunteers.

- Exercise common sense.
- Do not send children off to train alone and out of sight and supervision

- Ensure that children use appropriate protective gear
- Ensure that all physical contact with children is relevant and appropriate to the activity
- Seek permission to touch at all times including when doing the above.
- Do not engage in any intimate, over-familiar or sexual relationships with people under the age of 18 years.
- Ensure that any filming or photography of children is appropriate.
- Explain the purpose and obtain consent (from parents/caregivers) prior to filming or photographing children.
- Request parental consent before transporting children in a vehicle - ensure that the vehicle is insured and has a current Warrant of Fitness and registration.
- Ensure you have parental consent to administer first aid if required.
- Do not engage in communication with a child, on a one-on-one basis, through social media, texting or email, other than for relevant coach/athlete feedback or administration.
- Do not allow parents, coaches, other children, or spectators to engage in any type of bullying behaviour (this includes cyber/text bullying).
- Do not engage in any bullying activity.

Avoiding situations where you are alone with a child

- Avoid private or unobserved situations, including being alone with a child in the changing rooms.
- Avoid entering changing rooms - if you must enter, knock and announce yourself and try to have at least one other adult with you.
- Avoid driving a child unaccompanied.
- Do not invite or encourage children to your home.
- Always have another adult present when staying overnight anywhere with children.
- Do not share a bedroom or sleeping quarters with a child, unless they are your own.

Dealing with Child welfare issues

In dealing with complaints of the types of behaviour outlined in this policy, or behaviour that falls short of our expectations or our values, The OHA will:

- Deal with the matter fairly and as quickly as possible;
- Respect the feelings and views of the complainant; and
- Provide a fair process for the respondent to the complaint.

Process:

- Ensure the child is safe from immediate harm and danger.
- Listen to the child and reassure them.
- Record accurately and appropriately any information received/observed. Record facts concisely including:
 - Type of harm
 - Signs and symptoms noted
 - Any particular incidents with dates, times and place
 - Any action taken
- Consult immediately with the OHA General Manager.
- If a formal complaint is warranted, follow the procedure as set out in the OHA Code of Conduct.
- The complaint will then be assessed fully, promptly and confidentially.

- The General Manager will ensure that staff or volunteers are made aware of the allegations against them at an appropriate time as soon as possible after the complaint is received.
- Report your concern to the police
- Follow the advice of the police.
- Decide who will inform the parents and provide support to the family.
- Ensure the child is in a safe place.
- The investigation will be handled sensitively and confidentially.

In some circumstances, OHA may decide that an investigation is necessary even where a formal complaint has not been made. Where an investigation is conducted, the OHA Code of Conduct complaints procedure will apply, unless specifically determined otherwise (including referring the matter for civilian or criminal legal action).

Other avenues of laying a formal complaint

If your complaint is not resolved satisfactorily or you wish to seek outside assistance you can refer the problem to:

- OHA Whistleblower Policy
- Human Rights Commission;
- Netsafe; and/or
- WorkSafe New Zealand

The Sport New Zealand Sport & Recreation Complaint & Mediation Service is also available to all participants and their families.

Responsibilities of Managers and Coaches

Managers and Coaches have the following responsibilities to:

- Understand what acceptable behaviours is and what is not.
- Ensure that children under their care are safe from immediate harm.
- Model appropriate behaviour at all times.
- Ensure the personnel within their supervision are aware of this policy.
- Listen and seek to fully understand concerns raised, including listen to the child and reassuring them.
- Intervene in any inappropriate behaviour, and seek to stop it.
- Ensure that complainants are not victimised as a result of making a complaint.
- Record accurately and appropriately any information received/observed. Record facts concisely including:
 - Type of harm
 - Signs and symptoms noted
 - Any particular incidents with dates, times and place
 - Any action taken
- Consult immediately with the OHA General Manager
- Support the GM in investigating any allegations and take reasonably practicable steps to prevent the recurrence that has been found to have occurred.

Responsibilities of Personnel

Personnel are responsible for:

- Promoting respect for each other.
- Ensure children/ child is safe from immediate harm.
- Not retaliating if an issue is raised and providing support to those who may raise an

issue.

- Participating openly and honestly in any discussions or investigations taken.
- Being aware of their own conduct and the potential impacts this may have on others.
- Accepting personal responsibility for their actions.

The Outcome

OHA personnel found to have breached this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal or termination of contract.

Possible outcomes of the investigative process:

- A satisfactory mediated outcome.
- Disciplinary action imposed for a breach of this policy.
- No action taken due to finding no breach of the policy or insufficient evidence.
- Action against the complainant (or other person) due to a finding of frivolous, vexatious or malicious allegation.
- Referral to another agency.

Types of actions or penalties that could potentially result from a breach of the policy.

- Written warnings.
- Suspension of a person from a role they hold within OHA.
- Termination of employment of the OHA personnel concerned.
- Termination of contract with OHA.
- Banning of a person from activities held by or sanctioned by OHA.
- A direction to complete a reasonable task i.e. letter of apology or corrective action.
- Referral of the matter to an appropriate authority.
- Ongoing education on the matter.

Vexatious or Malicious Complaints

The purpose of the complaint procedure set out in this policy is to provide an avenue to raise genuine complaints in good faith.

If a complaint was vexatious or maliciously made, then disciplinary action against the complainant may be taken. However, just because a complaint is not upheld does not mean that it is vexatious and / or malicious.

Support Available

Support is available from:

- Your manager.
- Your coach.
- Other support services that may be available.

Relevant Legislation

This Policy takes into account the following legislation:

- Employment Relations Act 2000
- Harassment Act 1997
- Health and Safety at Work Act 2015
- Human Rights Act 1993
- Privacy Act 1993
- Harmful Digital Communications Act 2015
- Crimes Act 1961 – Protection of Children
- Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1989
- Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992
- Vulnerable Children Act 2014

Related OHA Policies:

- Code of Conduct.
- Communication, Media and Social Media Policy.
- Prevention of Harassment, Bullying and Discrimination Policy.

**SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL:
GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES FOR PROVIDING SAFE HOCKEY
FOR CHILDREN**

The following good practice guidelines are to provide a safe environment for children to play hockey. They provide guidance to those working with children and boundaries in a range of situations.

Ensure children are treated equally and with dignity through a child-centred approach

- Activities should be appropriate for the age and stage of the children in your care.
- Ensure feedback to children is about their performance and not of a personal nature.
- Use positive and age appropriate language when talking to children and in their Presence.
- All children are to be valued and treated in an equitable and fair manner regardless of ability, age, sex, religion, social and ethnic background or political persuasion. All children should be involved in activities in an integrated and inclusive way.

Creating a safe and open working environment that also reduces risk to staff and volunteers

- Ensure that all equipment and facilities comply with safety regulations.
- Do not send children off to train alone or out of sight or supervision.
- Obtain consent from parents/guardians prior to filming or photographing children. Also obtain parent/guardian consent to publish photographs and videos on children involved in Hockey led programmes.
- Ensure that start and finish times are communicated with parents/guardians and are adhered to so that children are not left unsupervised.
- Ensure that children are collected by a parent/guardian or other authorised person at the end of the activities.
- Request parental consent prior to transporting children in a vehicle.
- Except in an emergency when it is unsafe to delay, ensure you have parental consent to administer first aid if required.
- Do not engage in communication with a child on a one on one basis, through social media, texting or email, other than for relevant coach/athlete feedback or administration.
- Do not use alcohol, cigarettes or electronic cigarettes, or drugs in the presence of children and do not offer any of these to children under any circumstances.
- Ensure that all physical contact with children is relevant and appropriate to the activity.
- Do not engage in any intimate or sexual relationships with people under the age of 18 years.
- Do not engage in any bullying activity.
- Do not allow parents, coaches, other children, or spectators to engage in any type of bullying behaviour (this includes cyber/text bullying).

Avoiding situations where you are alone with a child

- Avoid private or unobserved situations, including being alone with a child in the changing rooms, driving a child unaccompanied, team accommodation rooms, offices.
- Do not invite or encourage children to your home without their parent/guardian.

- Always have another adult present when needing to meet for a one on one with children.
- Do not share a room with a child other than your own in the absence of their parent/guardian.

Confidentiality

- Otago Hockey will seek advice from the Ministry for Children (Oranga Tamariki) and/or the Police before identifying information about an allegation is shared with anyone, other than the service manager or designated person.
- Under sections 15 and 16 of the Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989 any person who believes that a child has been or is likely to be, harmed physically, emotionally or sexually or ill-treated, abused, neglected or deprived may report the matter to the Ministry for Children (Oranga Tamariki) or the Police and provided the report is made good faith, no civil, criminal or disciplinary proceedings may be brought against them.
- When collecting personal information about individuals, it is important to be aware of the requirements of the privacy principles – i.e., the need to collect the information directly from the individual concerned and when doing so to be transparent about: the purposes for collecting the information and how it will be used; who can see the information; where it is held; what is compulsory/voluntary information; and that people have a right to request access to and correction of their information.
- Staff may, however, disclose information under the Privacy ACT/Health Information Privacy Code where there is good reason to do so – such as where there is a serious risk to individual health and safety (see privacy principle 11/Code rule 11). Disclosure about ill-treatment or neglect of a child/young person may also be made to the Police or Ministry for Children (Oranga Tamariki) under sections 15 and 16 of the Children, Young Persons, and their Families Act 1989.

Identifying abuse

This section of the guidelines provides definitions of abuse and harassment, to assist staff and volunteers recognise the different forms of harm that can be inflicted on children.

The Children and Young Persons and their Families Act 1989 defines child abuse as: *“...the harming (whether physically, emotionally, sexually), ill-treatment, abuse, neglect or deprivation of any child or young person.”*

1. Emotional Abuse, Bullying and Harassment

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as causing severe and persistent effect on their emotional development. This can include a pattern of rejecting, degrading, ignoring, isolating, corrupting, threatening, exploiting or terrorising.

Emotional bullying may be verbal or through social media and texting, aimed at another person/s including name-calling, insults, teasing, sectarian/racist comments; or it may be indirect by spreading malicious gossip, rumours or exclusion from a social group.

Physical bullying includes hitting, kicking, taking or damaging belongings, or any other type of attack.

Online bullying can be defined as using any online platform to send messages or share material that is intended to cause serious emotional distress to another person. Online platforms include internet sites, email, apps, social media or mobile phones. Examples of online bullying include:

- Sending or publishing online embarrassing pictures or videos for others to view.
- Online posting of threatening offensive or nasty comments.
- Spreading damaging or degrading rumours.
- Inciting suicidal attempts through online posts.

Online bullying has the potential to cause great anxiety and emotional distress to the person who is the target of any comments or statements. Serious incidents fall under the 'Harmful Digital Communications Act' and are punishable under the law.

2. Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is any act that may result in physical harm of a child. It can be bruising, cutting, hitting, beating, biting, burning, causing abrasions, strangulation, suffocation, drowning, poisoning, and induced illness.

3. Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, as well as non-contact acts such as involving children in the looking at or production of sexual images, sexual activities and sexual behaviours

4. Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, causing long term serious harm to their health or development.

Examples may include:

- Not providing adequate food, shelter or clothing.
- Not protecting them from physical harm or danger.
- Not accessing appropriate medical treatment.
- Allowing a child to be exposed to the illicit drug manufacturing process.

Is Touching OK?

If a coaching technique would require benefit from physical contact, then first ask for the child or young person's permission (e.g. 'Would you mind if I held your shoulders to show what I mean?') It is useful to take time to explain why and how this is used to the person and their parent/guardian. Touching is appropriate if it is neither intrusive nor disturbing or for the wrong reason.

What if You Accidentally Hurt a Child?

The incident should be reported to another coach, manager, official, or Otago Hockey and record a brief written note about it. You should also inform the child's parents or guardians, preferably in person. The incident should also be logged on the OHA Incident Register as part of the Health & Safety obligation.

Signs and Indicators of Abuse

There may be physical and behavioural signs that raise concern about the welfare or safety of a child and young person. Some examples may be:

Where the child or young person:

- Discloses incidents of abuse.
- Has an injury for which the explanations seem inconsistent.
- Exhibits concerning behaviour changes, becoming aggressive, withdrawn or unhappy.
- Sexualised language or behaviour that is inappropriate for their age.
- Becomes increasingly neglected looking in appearance.

Safe recruitment processes for staff and volunteers

Otago Hockey seeks to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of all people

participating in hockey. To ensure that suitable and appropriate staff and volunteers (including parents) are working with children in hockey, a robust recruitment and screening process should be followed for all roles.

Screening

- The Vulnerable Children's Act requires all persons who have direct contact with any person(s) under the age of 18 years to be screened
- Otago Hockey will undertake the screening process and manage all applications, recording and review processes involved with the screening

Screening is mandatory for those seeking appointment to the following roles:

- o Otago Hockey employees
- o Coaches (volunteer or paid) appointed by Otago Hockey
- o Team managers and personnel appointed by Otago Hockey for all representative teams
- o Persons appointed by Otago Hockey to a role that is likely to have individual and unsupervised contact with participants under the age of 18

Screening is recommended for those persons appointed by Otago Hockey to a role in which that person is likely to have direct contact with participants under the age of 18 years but where such contact is supervised at all times by another adult.

Screening shall include:

- o Interviewing the applicant.
- o Verifying the applicant's application.
- o Obtaining a Police check for the preferred applicant (refer Police Vetting Policy).
- o Obtaining a Ministry of Justice Criminal check for the preferred applicant.

Appointment of a child protection officer

The Child Protection Officer (CPO) shall be the General Manager, Otago Hockey, and be communicated to the hockey community.

The primary role of the CPO is to manage child protection issues. The main responsibilities include:

- Ensuring that child protection procedures are understood and adhered to by all members and staff.
- Organising training opportunities and raising awareness within the organisation.
- Establishing and maintaining the complaints procedure.
- Reporting to the Otago Hockey Board as appropriate.
- Acting as the main contact and support for child protection matters.
- Keeping up to date with child protection legislation.
- Liaising with child protection agencies when required.
- Maintaining confidential records for reported cases and any action taken.
- Regularly monitoring and reviewing existing policies and procedures.

Education and training of staff and volunteers

In addition to the recruitment and screening process, the child protection process should include subsequent monitoring and training of staff and volunteers in order to ensure that they are working safely and effectively with children:

- Staff/volunteer induction is an ideal time to introduce the child protection policy.
- Staff/volunteers should be clear what constitutes inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour.
- Identify any potential risk situations.
- Identify and respond to any unacceptable behaviour or practises of staff and

volunteers and respond in a positive manner i.e. training to improve practises.

- Otago Hockey will endeavour to work with external agencies to provide appropriate training/workshops for staff and volunteers.
- All staff and volunteers will be required to sign off on the 'Adult Behavioural Form' attached to this policy.

Complaint and investigative process – breaches of the child protection policy

Any person may make a complaint about a person to whom this Child Protection Policy applies if they consider that a person has, or may have, breached any part of this policy.

Any complaint relating to this policy must be forwarded to the CPO and should be dealt with in line with the procedures outlined in this policy, Otago Hockey Code of Conduct, and the Hockey New Zealand Code of Conduct.

Responding to suspected/disclosed harm; physical or sexual abuse and/or neglect

Physical or sexual abuse is the most serious form of harm and will require an immediate response. In responding to suspected or disclosed child physical or sexual abuse there are some key principles that must be applied immediately. These are:

- The welfare and interests of the child are the first and paramount considerations.
- Suspected and actual incidences of reported harm should be responded to and recorded accurately and appropriately and as soon as possible.
- If you think the child is at immediate risk, then contact the police.
- Managing the right of the offender – people who have allegedly acted improperly also have rights e.g. privacy. They also have a reputation and families of their own and it is important to carefully investigate any complaints and follow a fair and robust process.

Allegations made against members of staff

- Allegations, suspicions or complaints of abuse against staff, volunteers, or representatives of other agencies must be taken seriously and reported to the Child Protection Officer who will deal with them immediately, sensitively, and expediently within the procedures outlined in this section.
- It is not the responsibility of the staff to investigate allegations of child abuse.
- If the police decide to undertake a criminal investigation then the member of staff may be suspended without prejudice, as a precautionary measure. It is important that no internal investigation is undertaken and no evidence gathered that might prejudice the criminal investigation.
- Otago Hockey will ensure all effort is made to provide access to support and services to staff and volunteers following reporting of child abuse and/or neglect.

Otago Hockey practice guidelines

Otago Hockey will ensure that, to the best of its endeavours, it will provide:

- Proper supervision of children playing hockey and a satisfactory ratio of coaches or managers per child or young person.
- A safe environment for children within Otago Hockey facilities.
- Support to members who report accusations of abuse or inappropriate behaviour.
- Suspected abuse information is treated confidentially.
- Appropriate action is taken if members breach standards of reasonable behaviour.
- The implementation and maintenance of a coach / manager / volunteer register

Otago Hockey has the right to:

- Expect all members to comply with its behavioural requirements.

- Expect all child / youth members to maintain standards of reasonable behaviour.
- Take appropriate action if members breach the behavioural requirements.
- Expect all members to undertake appropriate training when advised to.
- Expect leaders or people put into positions of responsibility not to abuse members physically, emotionally or sexually.
- Take appropriate action in the event of accusations.
- Acquire pre-appointment suitability checks on all employees, coaches, managers and Volunteers.
- Maintain records on individuals during their time of appointment.

Adult behavioural requirements

Otago Hockey is committed to delivering a positive culture and experience to the Hockey community. All employees, coaches, managers and volunteers are encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect players (including young people and children) in their care; and themselves from false allegations.

Recognising the inequality of a relationship between adults and children/young people, the following practices are never to be sanctioned by employees, coaches, managers and volunteers:

- Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games.
- Sharing a room/bath/shower with a child/young person.
- Allowing or engaging in any form of inappropriate touching.
- Personal communication about matters outside the team – including verbal, phone, texting and social media.
- Making sexually suggestive comments to a child/young person.
- Spending time alone with a child/young person away from others. This includes driving a child/young person alone unless accompanied by another person.
- Undertaking personal care of a child/young person, including inviting or allowing a child to your home. Ensure that a parent or carer is responsible for personal care.
- Allowing children/young people to use foul, sexualised or discriminatory language unchallenged.
- Allowing bullying of any type to take place without taking the appropriate action.
- Reducing a child/young person to tears as a form of control.
- Allowing allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted on.

Any misdemeanours or general misbehaviour must be addressed by the immediate coach or manager and reported verbally to the appropriate person at Otago Hockey. Parents will be informed.

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