



Grimsby Tennis Centre



Child Protection Policy statement

Club Child Protection Policy statement

Introduction

The Grimsby Tennis Centre have responded to the Lawn Tennis Association working with Children initiative by producing this document and implementing the recommended policies.

The policy is intended not only for the coaches at the Centre but to all Members who will meet children at the Centre .

All adults need to be aware of :-

1. The Children Act 1989
2. Child abuse and what it is
3. The importance of their own behaviour

We owe it to our future generation to behave responsibly.

Allan Thompson

Chairman
(2000)

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Good Practice at *Grimsby Tennis Centre*

1. The *Grimsby Tennis Centre* aims to create an enjoyable environment for all juniors who wish to take part in tennis, other sport and social activities at the Centre
2. The Centre emphasises that young people have the right to be safe, secure and free from threat
3. The Centre acknowledges that young people have the right to be treated with respect and for their concerns to be listened to and acted upon
4. The Centre will ensure that junior members have specific programmes and facilities designated for them, with adequate supervision
5. The Centre has procedures in place to help any young person who requests help and support on a confidential basis, in issues relating to Child Protection
6. The Centre will ensure that the Head Coach is suitably qualified and that other coaches and coaching assistants are either qualified or have signed the Centre self declaration form in relation to Child Protection
7. The Centre will ensure that any Centre members and volunteers working with young people are aware of and apply the LTA Code of Conduct for Those Working with Children in Tennis, and have signed the Centre self declaration form in relation to Child Protection
8. The Centre has an adult member who is specifically responsible for young people.

This person's name is Andrew Lashbrook
and the contact telephone number is 01472 342427

Self Declaration Form

(adapted from a number of Local Authority forms)

Personal disclosure for all Coaches, Centre Officials and volunteers working or in contact with young people and children in the Grimsby Tennis Centre

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence or been the subject of a caution or bound over order?

YES NO

If 'Yes' please state the nature and date(s) of the offence(s):

Have you ever been subject to any disciplinary action or sanctions relating to children?

YES NO

If 'Yes' please give details

You are required to self-certify that you are not known to ANY Social Services Department as being an actual or potential risk to children; that you have not been disqualified or prohibited from fostering children or had any rights or powers in respect of any child vested in or assumed by a local authority; or had a child ordered to be removed from your care.

I understand that under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Amendment) 1986, I must declare all convictions (including 'spent' convictions). I will advise the Centre of any convictions incurred by me after completion of this form.

I understand that the Centre reserves the right to make reference to the Local Authority Social Services Department and Police Records to verify the information given by this form. This form will be held securely by the Centre.

Signed

Dated

Name

Any Surnames previously known by

Address

The LTA Code of Conduct for all those working with Children in Tennis

Whilst it is important for adults to understand their responsibilities with children, the LTA is concerned that specific advice is given concerning the behaviour of all coaches, staff and Centre and other officials. In addition, those who employ, for example, coaches, should know what standard of behaviour is acceptable.

Those working with children in tennis should:

1. be professional and maintain the highest standards of personal behaviour at all times
2. be aware of situations which can be misconstrued or manipulated by others. For example, if the coach or official is alone with a child in the Club house, changing rooms or similar place, they are open to the possibility of allegations about their behaviour
3. be vigilant and aware of how actions can be misinterpreted. For example, adolescents can have strong emotional feelings towards coaches. Whilst these should not be dismissed and the youngster hurt as a result, neither should they be encouraged in any way
4. not appear to favour or show interest in one child more than another
5. be very aware that physically handling a player, perhaps to help develop a game skill such as the backhand swing, can be misconstrued by an observer or even by the player
6. never swear or use or respond to sexual innuendo
7. design and use training methods and training programmes which are wholly appropriate to the individual player.
8. ensure that, as far as possible, they are not alone when working with young players on an individual basis. If this is unavoidable then the parents should be made aware of the situation for the sake of the coach or official. This also means that children should not be alone in cars or homes with a coach/official on a regular basis. The presence of others is an insurance against false accusations
9. conduct all dealings with children in a public environment in full view of others, in order that all behaviour can be observed
10. on tours/trips away from home, ensure that another adult is always present when working with children. For example, another adult should always be present if a child's room is visited at any time and the door should always be left open.
11. report any concerns within the area of Child Protection (physical, emotional, sexual or neglect), in confidence and without delay, to the Coach Education Director or a responsible person who can give advice and recommend any necessary action.
12. not, at any time, discuss an allegation or suspicion with another person, other than the police, before either the above person or a responsible person has been contacted.
13. when reporting an allegation or suspicion, record information, including relevant details. (This includes the nature of the allegation, background information of the parties involved, the period of time to which the allegation relates and the degree to which the information is known to be fact rather than opinion or hearsay).
14. at no time make comment to the media. The LTA Press Office should be made aware of any media interest in relation to child protection.

In the event of an allegation of improper behaviour being made, the personal conduct and professional behaviour of the adult will **be very important evidence**. For child abuse to take place, particularly sexual abuse, the child and the adult(s) will generally be alone and away from public view. Thus the best defence is to avoid all situations in which behaviour cannot be observed.

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If you have any queries regarding information in these Guidelines please contact:

Mrs Anne Pankhurst, Coach Education Director, The Lawn Tennis Association, The Queens Centre, West Kensington, London W14 9EG

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The responsibilities for those working with children are twofold:-

1. To recognise signs of abuse and to take any necessary action to help the child.

Recognising abuse in a child can be very difficult unless there are some signs of physical or behavioural change. However, the possibility of abuse may be suspected from something which the child says, or by something which another person says. It is important to be aware and vigilant, but not to make assumptions.

Sometimes the child may give an indication that they want to talk and then it is important to follow a number of principles.

- The child must feel safe and you must be calm and honest.
- The child is asking for help and it may have taken a great deal of courage to ask for that help. However, you must make it clear that you will need to contact other people who will be able to give the help which is needed.
- You must listen to what the child says and not suggest ideas. Use open questions and record what has been said as soon as possible. It is very important to record facts, not opinions.

It is then vital that you contact, in confidence, someone who can help. This may be a senior colleague, but the LTA also has staff responsible for all Child Protection issues. Therefore, in the first instance, you could contact the Coach Education Director at the LTA or failing that, the Human Resources Manager. If you cannot make direct contact yourself, these two members of staff will be contacted immediately and will get in touch with you.

The telephone numbers of the Coach Education Director are: 020 7381 7054(o), 0797 1141341 (mobile), 01935 851219(h). The Human Resources Manager can be contacted on 020 7381 7106

It is important to realise that you have confidential information and you should not discuss it with anyone other than someone whom you are sure can help. It is NOT sufficient to do nothing and hope that the problem will 'go away'. Child abusers are frequently repeat offenders and so other children are at risk. If the abuse occurred sometime previously, you should still contact one of the people above since they will know what procedures to follow. It is also possible that the LTA already has information, possibly insufficient, on the same person and the information you are giving will be invaluable.

Any information you give -and the fact that you gave it - will always be confidential.

Social Services (and the Police) have duties under the Children Act and if you are advised to make contact with them, or if that contact is made for you, then specific procedures follow which ensure that the child is protected as necessary.

2. To ensure that behaviour working with children, cannot be called into question.

As a responsible adult you have a responsibility to protect children from harm. Since abuse takes a number of forms, exists to different degrees and affects children in different ways, you should be very aware of the impact of your own words and actions on young players. Those who, for example, constantly criticise and rebuke players may be guilty of abuse or at the very least be responsible for the youngster deciding not to play tennis. From an ethical and legal viewpoint you have a duty to ensure that your verbal and non verbal communication with all players, but children in particular, is positive. You have a duty to ensure that you have taken all reasonable care to protect children from harm.

Those who use or impose over demanding and inappropriate training and tournament programmes with young players which result in physical damage, should consider very carefully where the ethical and legal boundaries are. You have a duty to prevent physical injury and so should be very objective whether the physical programmes are appropriate to individual players in terms of their age, ability and physical development.

Any behaviour, words or actions which could be construed by others or the child as sexual in nature should be of very serious concern. It is not acceptable, for example, to swear or indulge in sexual innuendo with children or use physical contact which may be misinterpreted.