

Oxford Bridge Club CIO

Safeguarding of vulnerable players

Definition of vulnerability

“Vulnerable players” includes children and any adults who, because of mental or physical infirmity, are more vulnerable to harm than the generality of adult players. For the purposes of child protection legislation the term 'child' refers to anyone up to the age of 18 years.

Definition of safeguarding

The Charity Commission website defines safeguarding as:

- all agencies working with children, young people and their families taking all reasonable measures to ensure that the risks of harm to children's welfare are minimised; and
- where there are concerns about children and young people's welfare, all agencies taking appropriate actions to address those concerns, working to agreed local policies and procedures in full partnership with other local agencies.

Context

OBC CIO activities do not currently involve any specific regular contact with children and vulnerable adults. However children and vulnerable adults are permitted to participate in bridge sessions at the club. It is possible that, in the future, specific sessions for children may be organised, so it is important to have a policy and procedures in place.

Policy

1. The welfare of the child is paramount; and all children without exception have the right to protection from abuse regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs.
2. The policy applies not only to the trustees of Oxford Bridge Club CIO (OBC CIO) but to all members and visiting players who may come into contact with children or vulnerable adults.
3. Whenever a child or vulnerable adult joins OBC CIO, the parent or guardian of the child, or the principle carer of a vulnerable adult, will be informed of the safeguarding policy and procedures.
4. All concerns, and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously by trustees, employees and members and responded to appropriately.
5. The trustees of OBC CIO have made a commitment to safe recruitment, selection and vetting; and to principles, legislation and guidance that underpin the policy; and undertake to conduct an annual review of the safeguarding policy and procedures.

Procedures

1. The OBC CIO trustees shall appoint a Child Protection Officer (CPO) and a Deputy CPO and report the appointments to the Annual General Meeting. The identity of the CPO should be included in the list of trustees and officers and published on the notice board and the OBC CIO web site.
2. The OBC CIO trustees shall agree a defined role and responsibilities with the CPO. This document shall include a description of what child abuse is, and the procedures for how to respond to it where there are concerns about a child's safety or welfare or concerns about the actions of a trustee, employee or member; and relevant contact details for children's services, police, health and NSPCC helplines.

3. The trustees, in collaboration with the CPO, shall establish a process for recording incidents, concerns and referrals and storing these securely in compliance with relevant legislation and kept for a time specified by our insurance company.
4. The trustees, in collaboration with the CPO, shall produce guidance on confidentiality and information sharing, and legislation compliance.
5. The trustees, in collaboration with the CPO, shall produce a code of behaviour for trustees, staff and volunteers, including a clear statement of the consequences of breaching the code, linked to disciplinary and grievance procedures.
6. The trustees, in collaboration with the CPO, shall produce safe recruitment, selection and vetting procedures that include checks into the eligibility and the suitability of all trustees, employees and members who have direct or indirect (e.g. helpline, email) contact with children.
7. The trustees, in collaboration with the CPO, shall produce a complaints procedure which is an open and well publicised way in which adults and children can voice concerns about unacceptable and/or abusive behaviour towards children.
8. The trustees, in collaboration with the CPO, shall produce systems to ensure that all staff and volunteers working with children are monitored and supervised and that they have opportunities to learn about child protection in accordance with their roles and responsibilities.
9. The trustees, in collaboration with the CPO, shall define requirements for trustees, staff and volunteers to learn about child protection in accordance with and as appropriate to their roles and responsibilities.

Code of behaviour (draft)

1. No member should be in sole charge of a child.
2. If an adult member is to be in sole charge of a child, this should be notified without delay to the OBC CIO CPO.
3. No member of OBC CIO should be in sole charge of a vulnerable adult except with the knowledge of the OBC trustees.
4. DBS checks will be carried out in the light of current legislation and regulation.
5. Any OBC CIO member who has concerns about potential risks to a minor or a vulnerable adult should report their concerns to the CPO immediately.
6. The CPO must communicate any concerns to the OBC CIO Chairman and Secretary.
7. The Chairman, Secretary and CPO must investigate the concerns.
8. Any decision on further action should be taken after discussion with the relevant authorities.

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