

# Amateur Martial Association Ltd



## WELFARE & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

reviewed 17/07/2020

Version (6)



## Introduction

Throughout this document Amateur Martial Association Ltd is referred to as **AMA**

**AMA is a World recognised** Governing Body for its members and has developed a Welfare & Child Protection Policy for implementation throughout its member Associations throughout the United Kingdom.

**AMA** recognises the need to make provision for children and young persons, and acknowledges its moral and legal responsibility to ensure that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse;
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- All staff (paid /unpaid) working within our sport have a responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate officer

The Children's Act 1987 defines a child as a person under the age of 18.

This Welfare & Child Protection Policy has been accepted by the **AMA** Executive Committee and is mandatory for all AMA member clubs, associations and Federations.

**AMA** is committed to working in partnership with all agencies to ensure best practice when working with children and young people, the majority of our membership

Adopting best practice will help to safeguard those participants from potential abuse as well as protecting coaches and other adults in positions of responsibility from any potential allegation of abuse.

This document is binding for our entire member Associations and provides procedures and guidance to everyone in AMA, whether working in a voluntary or professional capacity.



## Policy Statement

Martial Arts as a sport and pastime has a duty of care to safeguard all Adults & children involved in all forms of Martial Arts from harm. All children have a right to protection, and the needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account.

**AMA** will strive to ensure the safety and protection of all children involved in our sport through adherence to the Child Protection guidelines (4) adopted by the AMA Executive Committee and approved at the time of adoption by Sport England and the NSPCC - Child Protection in Sport Unit.

AMA is dedicated to achieving Intermediate standard of Policy.

The policy will be implemented by our entire member Associations and is applicable to all Association Officers, club Instructors and officials as well as all officers and staff of AMA

Sport can and does have a very powerful and positive influence on people especially young people. Not only can it provide opportunities for enjoyment and achievement; it helps to develop and enhance valuable qualities such as self-esteem, leadership and teamwork. We have to ensure that for those positive experiences to take place that sport is in the hands of those who have the welfare of young people uppermost in their mind and that we have proper procedures and practices to support and empower them.



## Policy aims

The aim of the **AMA Welfare & Child Protection** Policy is to promote safe & good practice:

- Providing Adults, children and young persons with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of Martial Arts clubs and instructors affiliated to AMA.
- Ensure that all incidents of poor practice and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- Allow all staff /volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.
- The policy recognises and builds on the legal and statutory definition of a child.
- The distinction between ages of consent, civil and criminal liability are recognised but in the pursuit of good in the delivery and management of AMA, a young person is recognised as being under the age of 18 years [Children's Act 1989].
- **AMA** recognises that persons above the age of 18 are vulnerable to undue influence by adults in positions of responsibility, for example Junior International athletes aged Under 21years and provision is made for this instance within the AMA World Class programmes Athlete Charter, included as an appendix
- Through **AMA** implementation plan (attached as an appendix) each of our member Associations will provide a suitably experienced and qualified individual to act as their Welfare/Child Protection Officer and commit to a series of awareness raising and training seminars and workshops to assist them in fulfilling their role and will use AMA template forms and reporting sheets.
- Confidentiality will be upheld in line with the Data Protection Act 1984,the Human Rights Act 2000 and the **AMA** Whistle Blower's Policy (attached as an appendix).
- The Policy will be overseen by the **AMA** Lead Welfare & Child Protection Officer, the AMA Leading Officer, and in turn by the **AMA Executive Committee** through quarterly reporting procedures. Periodic reviews are built into **AMA** Implementation policy included within the appendices.



## Promoting Safe & Good Practice with Young People

### Introduction

Abuse, particularly sexual abuse, can arouse strong emotions in those facing such a situation. Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school and the sporting environment. It is a fact of life that some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with young people in order to harm them.

A coach, instructor, teacher, official or volunteer may have regular contact with young people and be an important link in identifying cases where a young person needs protection.

All cases of poor practice should be reported to the '**AMA Welfare & Child Protection Officer**' and or relevant authorities following the guidelines in this document.

When a child enters the club having experienced abuse outside the sporting environment, sport can play a crucial role in improving the child's self esteem. In such instances the club must work with the appropriate agencies to ensure the child receives the required support.

### Safe & Good Practice Guidelines

All those involved in Martial Arts should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to safeguard children and young people and protect themselves from false allegations. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate within Martial Arts:



## **Safe, Good practice means:**

- Always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging an open environment i.e. no secrets).
- Treating all young people/disabled adults equally, and with respect and dignity.
- Placing the welfare and safety of the child, young persons & adults first above the development of performance or competition.
- Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with players (e.g. it is not appropriate to have an intimate relationship with a child or to share a room with them).
- Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust, which empowers children to share in the decision-making process.
- Making sport fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play.
- Where any form of manual or physical support is required, it should be provided openly and in accordance with AMA Club Guidelines
- Keeping up to date with the technical skills, qualifications and insurance within Martial Arts.
- Involving parents/carers wherever possible (e.g. for the responsibility of their children in the changing rooms). If groups have to be supervised in the changing rooms, always ensure parents/teachers/coaches/officials work in pairs.



- Ensuring when mixed teams are taken away, they should always be accompanied by male and female member of staff (NB however, same gender abuse can also occur).
- Ensuring that at tournaments or residential events, adults should not enter children's rooms or invite children into their rooms.
- Being an excellent role model – this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people.
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people and disabled adults – avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will.
- Securing parental consent in writing to *act in loco parentis*, if the need arises to give permission for the administration of emergency first aid.
- Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.
- Requesting written parental consent if club officials are required to transport young people in their cars.



Within our coaching portfolios, we make particular reference to children and young people practising together and this guidance is now included here.

- ❖ Martial Arts Instructors need to understand the added responsibilities of teaching children and also basic principles of growth and development through childhood to adolescence. Exercises should be appropriate to age and build. Instructors should not simply treat children as small adults, with small adult bodies.
- ❖ The minimum age for a child beginning Martial Arts is 4yrs old in the AMA, as the build and maturity of individuals varies so much. However the nature of the class must be tailored to consider these factors.
- ❖ In general, the younger the child, the shorter the attention span. One hour is generally considered sufficient training time for the average 12 year old or below. Pre-adolescent children have a metabolism that is not naturally suited to generating anaerobic power, and therefore they exercise better aerobically, that is, at a steadily maintained rate. However, they can soon become conditioned to tolerate exercise in the short explosive bursts that more suit Karate training.
- ❖ Children should not do assisted stretching - they generally don't need to, and there is a real risk of damage with an inconsiderate or over-enthusiastic partner.
- ❖ Children should be carefully matched for size and weight for sparring practice.
- ❖ Great care must be taken, especially where children train in the proximity of adults, to avoid collision injury.
- ❖ Children should not do certain conditioning exercises; especially those, which are heavy, load bearing, for example weight training or knuckle push-ups. Children should not do any heavy or impact work but should concentrate on the development of speed, mobility, skill and general fitness.



**AMA** follows the specific guidance of the NSPCC Safe Sports Events document and **Sportscheck** document regarding our events and also events our members and we will be travelling to.

And our guidance covers –

Transport arrangements, travel checklists, supervision and staffing, emergency procedures, insurance special overnight arrangements and any special health requirements.

Within our provision for young talented athletes we follow, Sport England, UK Sport and BOA guidelines as detailed within our Athlete Charter.

### **Practice never to be sanctioned**

The following should be **avoided** except in emergencies. If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable they should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge in the club or the child's parents. For example, a child sustains an injury and needs to go to hospital, or a parent fails to arrive to pick a child up at the end of a session.

- **Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others**
- **Avoid taking children to your home where they will be alone with you.**

### **Practice never to be sanctioned**

- **Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay**
- **Share a room with a child**
- **Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching**
- **Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged**
- **Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun**
- **Reduce a child to tears as a form of control**
- **Allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon**
- **Do things of a personal nature for children or disabled adults that they can do for themselves**
- **Invite or allow children to stay with you at your home unsupervised**

**NB.** It may sometimes be necessary for staff or volunteers to do things of a personal nature for children, e.g. if they are young or are disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parents and the players. If a person is fully dependent on you, talk with him/her about what you are doing and give choices where possible. This is particularly so if you are involved in any dressing or undressing of outer clothing, or where there is physical contact, lifting/assisting to carry out particular activities. Avoid taking on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained.



If any of the following occur you should report this immediately to another colleague and record the incident. You should also ensure the parents of the child are told if:

- You accidentally hurt a child or young person
- He/she seems distressed in any manner.
- A student appears to be sexually aroused by your actions.
- A child or young person misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.

Contained within the AMA Club guidelines document (Appendix 1) are some practical ways in which you should help safeguard children and young people who take part in Martial Arts training within your Association:

- Coach Ratios
- Changing room awareness
- Dealing with injuries and Illness
- Collection of children by Parents/carers
- Discipline issues
- Physical contact issues
- Sexual Activity issues
- Participants in your Association or club with disabilities

### **Guidelines for Use of Photographic Filming Equipment at AMA and other Martial Arts Events**

There is no intention to stop people photographing their children, club mates, or photography and video been used as an educational tool but this is in the context of appropriate safeguards being in place.

There is evidence that some people have used sporting events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young and disabled sportspeople in vulnerable positions. It is advisable that all clubs be vigilant with any concerns to be reported to the Club Child Protection Officer. Any parent who wishes to photograph their child must seek permission from the instructor or competition organiser.

Official photographers must be registered with the event organiser and wear identification.

See AMA Photography Policy (APPENDIX 2)

**AMA** has a policy of recording authorised camera operators and this is implemented at our National junior and senior championships.

There is a charge for the pass of £5 per pass one pass covers both items (camera & video).



All passes must be worn while filming or taking snap shots. Where an operator is asked to produce a valid pass and fails to do so, they may be required to leave the premises. This pass is for use in the spectator seating or Balcony areas. It is not for permission to use photographic equipment around the Areas. If this privilege is abused and contradicts the well-being, ethics and integrity of which it was intended, the operator will be held responsible and will be required to leave the Sports Hall. Their details will be reported to the proper authority.

Videoring as a coaching aid: there is no intention to prevent club coaches and teachers using video equipment as a legitimate coaching aid. However, performers and their parents/carers should be aware that this is part of the coaching programme and care should be taken in the storing of such films.

**AMA** also follows closely the guidance issued by the Child Protection in Sport Unit advising that:

- Where athletes are used in promotional material the appropriate consent is obtained or models and or illustrations are used.
- Avoid using the first name and surname together, of individuals in a photograph
- If the athlete is named, we do not use their photograph without first obtaining the appropriate consent,
- If the photograph is used, we do not name the individual, without first obtaining the appropriate consent.
- Seek parental permission and that of the participant to use any image of any such participant. Our parental consent form is enclosed as an appendix
- Parental and or Player permission has been sought via our Photography Policy

## **Recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers**

**AMA** recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children in some way and that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children.

It is essential that the same procedures are used consistently for all posts whether staffs are paid or voluntary, full time or part time.

Under the Protection of Children Act 1999, all individuals working on behalf of, or otherwise representing, an organisation are treated as employees whether working in a paid or voluntary capacity.



## **New staff –**

### **When undertaking recruitment, the AMA will undertake the following:**

All applicants will be subject to the conditions and requirements of the AMA recruit Policy

Ensure there is a job description and person specification for all roles

All volunteers /staff involved in Martial Arts will complete an application form. The application form will elect information about the applicants past and a self-disclosure about any criminal record.

Consent should be obtained from an applicant to seek information from the Disclosure & Barring Service and the appropriate check will be carried out – an enhanced disclosure. [The AMA is a registered body for disclosure through the Disclosure & Barring Service].

Advertising will reflect the aims of the **AMA** key responsibilities of the role and necessary experience and our open and positive stance on child protection and equity will be implicit.

Pre-application information will be sent and an application form is necessary for all posts.

Following short-listing formal interviews will be held and the successful applicant will only be allowed to take up their post and duties once their DBS check has been cleared by **AMA**

There will be a period of induction, on going training and support plus monitoring and appraisal.

A minimum, of two confidential references, including where possible, one regards previous work with children.

These references must be taken up and confirmed through telephone contact.

Evidence of identity is required (Passport or driving licence with Photo, not utility bills).

## **Existing Staff -**

**All current AMA employees and officers shall complete a declaration of self-assessment and a DBS enhanced disclosure.**

**It is a requirement of all new Associations/Clubs that their officers have been DBS checked before they are accepted into membership and this is contained within our application and information pack enclosed as an appendix.**



## **Defining Child Abuse**

Child abuse is when an adult harms a child or young person. There are four main type of abuse:

### ***Physical abuse:***

This includes being hit, kicked, shaken or punched, or given harmful drugs or alcohol.

### ***Emotional abuse:***

This includes being called names all the time, being threatened or being shouted at or made to feel small.

### ***Sexual abuse:***

This includes being touched in a way you don't like by an adult or young person, being forced to have sex, or being made to look at sexual pictures or videos.

For some disabled children, it includes if a person helping them to use the toilet touched them more than was needed.

### ***Neglect:***

Is when a child is not looked after properly, including having no place to stay, or not enough food to eat, or clothes to keep them warm. It also includes if the child is not given medical care when they need it, including medication.

For some disabled children, it could include if their carer took away the things they needed for everyday life - like their wheelchair or communication board.

Or not helping a disabled child who needed help using the toilet.

## **Bullying**

Is also a form of abuse

Bullying includes hitting or threatening a child with violence, taking their things, calling them names or insulting them, making them do things they won't want to do, and deliberately humiliating or ignoring them.



## **Common Signs of Abuse**

Every child is unique, so behavioural signs of abuse will vary from child to child. In addition, the impact of abuse is likely to be influenced by the child's age, the nature and extent of the abuse, and the help and support the child receives. However, there are some behaviours that are commonly seen in children and young people who have been abused:

- The child appears distrustful of a particular adult, or a parent or a coach with whom you would expect there to be a close relationship.
- He or she has unexplained injuries such as bruising, bites or burns - particularly if these are on a part of the body where you would not expect them.
- If he or she has an injury which is not explained satisfactorily or properly treated.
- Deterioration in his or her physical appearance or a rapid weight gain or loss.
- Pains, itching, bruising, or bleeding in or near the genital area.
- A change in the child's general behaviour. For example, they may become unusually quiet and withdrawn, or unexpectedly aggressive. Such changes can be sudden or gradual.
- If he or she refuses to remove clothing for normal activities or wants to keep covered up in warm weather.
- If he or she shows inappropriate sexual awareness or behaviour for their age.
- Some disabled children may not be able to communicate verbally about abuse that they may be experiencing or have witnessed. It is therefore important to observe these children for signs other than 'telling'.

The above signs should be seen as a possible indication of abuse and not as a confirmation. Changes in a child's behaviour can be the result of a wide range of factors.

Visible signs such as bruising or other injuries cannot be taken as proof of abuse. For example some disabled children may show extreme changes in behaviour, or be more accident prone, as a result of their impairment.

### **AMA has a responsibility to act on any concerns.**

A child or young person may also try to tell a person directly about abuse. It is very important to listen carefully and respond sensitively.



## Responding to suspicions or allegations

It is not the responsibility of anyone working in Martial Arts, in a paid or unpaid capacity to take responsibility or to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. This is the role of the child protection agencies. However there is a responsibility for all involved in Martial Arts to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities.

Advice and information is available from the local Social Services Department, The Police or the NSPCC 24 hour [www.childlineonline.org.uk](http://www.childlineonline.org.uk) 0800 1111

**AMA** assures all staff/volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports his or her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child.

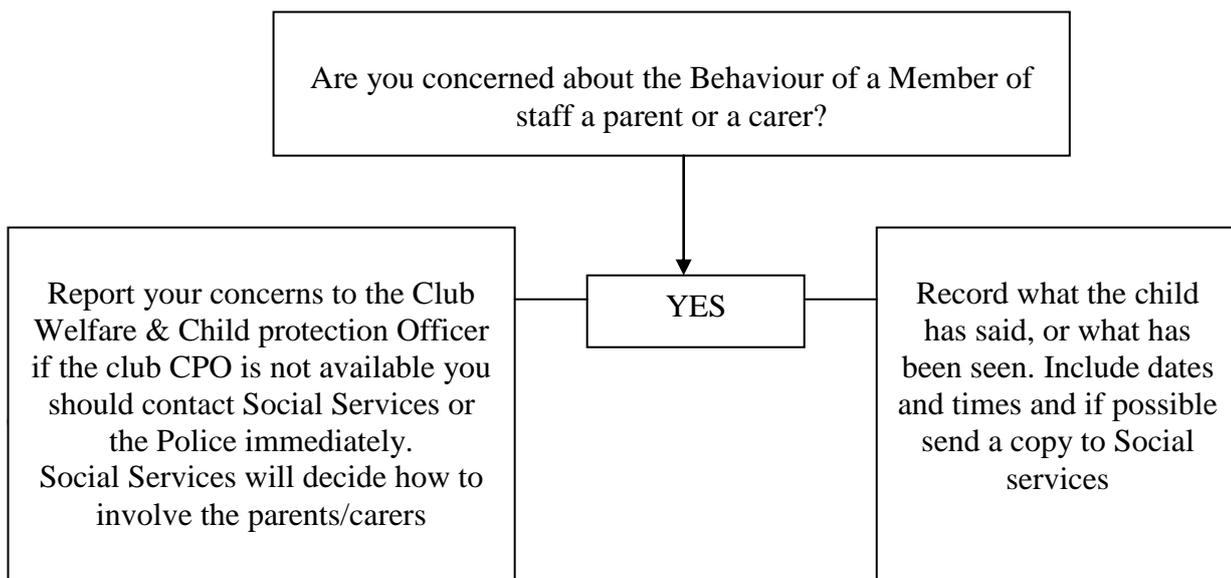
Where there is a complaint against a member of staff there may be three types of investigation

- A criminal investigation,
- A child protection investigation,
- A disciplinary or misconduct investigation.

The results of the Police and child protection investigation may well influence the disciplinary investigation, but not necessarily.

## Action to take if there are concerns about a child's safety or welfare

The following action should be taken if there are concerns:



**The Association/Club Welfare & Child Protection Officer should always inform the AMA Lead Welfare & Child Protection Officer on the appropriate form provided within 24 hours of receipt.**



## **Poor Practice**

If, following consideration **and consultation with AMA Lead Welfare & Child Protection Officer** the allegation is clearly about poor practice: the Club Child Protection Officer will deal with it as a misconduct issue. A final report or update must be forwarded directly to AMA Lead CPO within 1 month of the initial allegation report.

Allegations should be reported to the **AMA Lead Welfare & Child Protection Officer** in the first instance for **AMA** to guide action by the club and to enable the **AMA** to maintain central records and for monitoring purposes. If the allegation is about poor practice by the Association Child Protection Officer, or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, the **AMA Lead Welfare & Child Protection Officer** in consultation will decide how to deal with the allegation and handle the situation.

## **Suspected Abuse**

Any suspicion that a child has been abused by either a member of staff or a volunteer should be reported to the Association/Club Welfare or Child Protection Officer, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk.

The Association/Club Child Protection Officer will refer the allegation to the social services department who may involve the police, or go directly to the police or ***Social Services out-of-hours duty service.***

The parents or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social services department. **[In cases of suspected abuse within the family, Social Services department and or the Police must give advice on who should be contacted and when]**

The Association/Club Child Protection Officer will also notify the **AMA Welfare & Child Protection Officer Mr Peter Wright contact number 07896262258** within 24hours of the report being received, who will within 24 hours of such a report, advise or and deal with any procedural issues and media enquiries.

If the Association/Club Child Protection Officer is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made direct to the **AMA Welfare & Child Protection Officer** who will refer the allegation to LADO.



## Confidentiality

Every effort will be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned.

In so far as is practicable, confidentiality will be maintained at all times in respect of all persons involved, by any means, in any enquiry or investigations following a disclosure being made or concern being raised, unless, there is an overriding obligation whereby, in the interests of the safety, protection or overall welfare of any child or young person, such information, shall be shared with other interested parties. Any such information shall only be shared on a strict **NEED TO KNOW BASIS**

Interested parties might include the following:

- The Association/Club Child Protection Officer
- The parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused
- The person making the allegation
- Social services/police
- The **AMA** Lead Welfare & Child Protection Officer
- The alleged abuser and parents if the alleged abuser is a child.

*\*Seek social services advice on who should approach alleged abuser.*

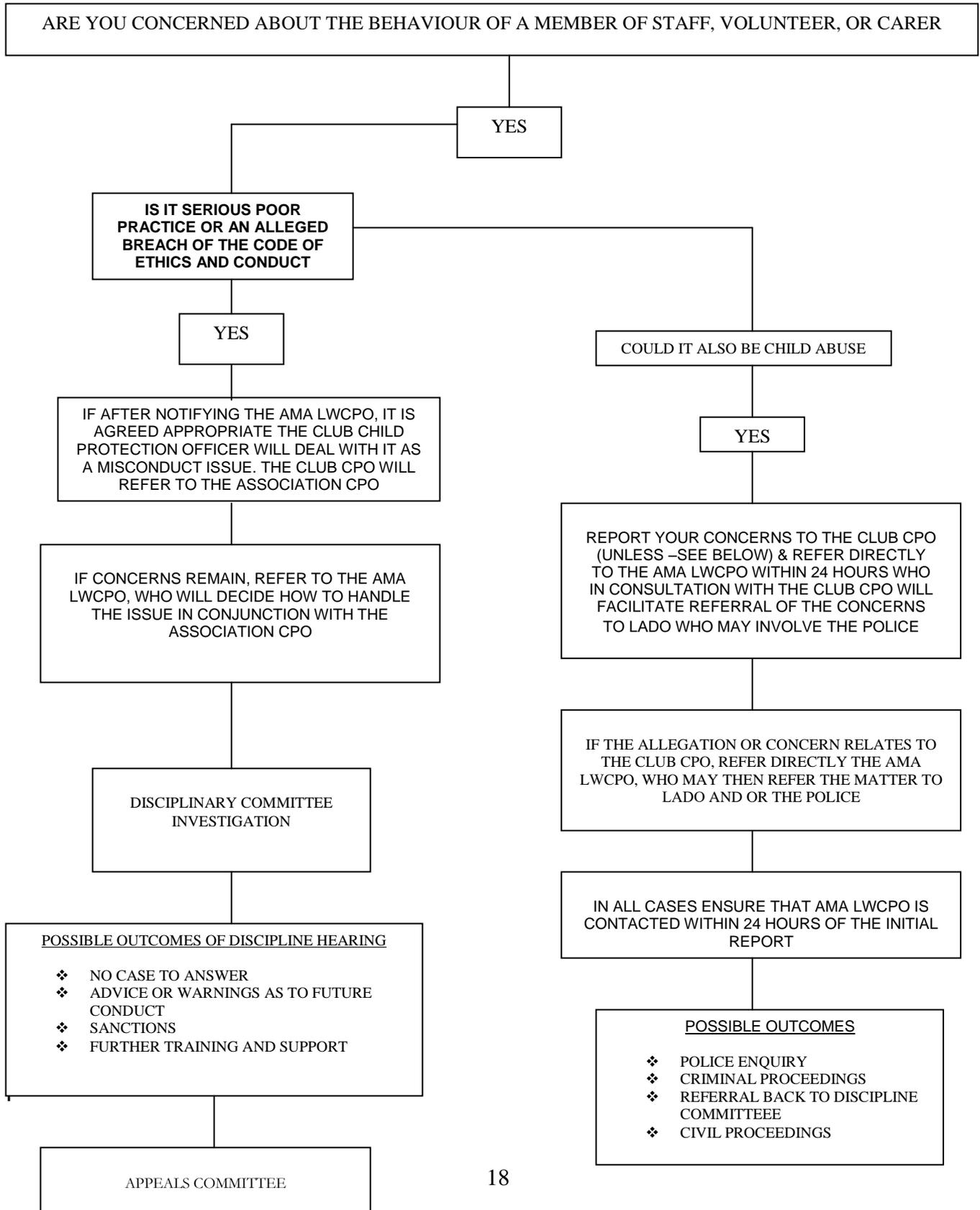
Information will be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws (e.g. that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).

AMA Data Recording Document (APPENDIX 3)

If you do not know whom to turn for advice or are worried about sharing your concerns with a senior colleague, you can contact the **AMA 'Whistleblower'** Designated person Mr Peter Wright, on **07896262258** or you should contact the social services direct (or [childline.org.uk](http://childline.org.uk) or phone 0800 1111



## What to do if there are concerns





## Information

Information passed to the social services or the police must be as helpful as possible, hence the necessity for making a detailed record at the time of the disclosure/concern. Information should include the following:

- Name of child
- Age of child and date of birth
- Race and Ethnic origin of the child
- Relevant disability or special needs
- Home address and telephone number
- Is the person making the report expressing their own concerns or those of someone else?
- If it is not the child making the report has the child concerned been spoken to? If so what has been said?
- What is the nature of the allegation? Include dates, times, any special factors and other relevant information.
- Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
- Describe any visible bruising or other injuries. Behavioural and indirect signs
- Record the details of witnesses to the incident/s.
- The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred.
- Have the parents been contacted? If so what has been said?
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so record details.
- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details.

AMA Welfare & L.C.P.O. has designed the following forms for your use:



AMA



RECORD OF DISCLOSURE FORM

AMA Welfare & Lead Child Protection Officer: Mr Peter Wright

Tel No: 07896262258 - email Address: southendgojukai@hotmail.com

Date.....

Your Name.....Position Held.....

Name:(child).....Age..... D.O.B.....

Address.....

.....Postcode:..... Tel.....

Race.....Ethnic Origin.....

Relevant special needs.....

Name and address of person reporting (if different to above)

.....  
.....

Date:.....Time:.....Place (of disclosure).....

What the child said:

Your own observations:

Any actions or advice given that you have decided to take:  
(Parent \*/Police/LADO/C.P.S.U./Local Authority/Other\*)

Your name..... Signature.....

AMA Licence No:.....Association/Club reference Number.....

\*Unless named as alleged abuser



AMA



### CHILD PROTECTION CONTACTS

Name of the person in your normal coaching environment to whom you should report any concerns about child protection issues:

.....

**Job Title** .....

**Address** .....

.....

**Tel No:** .....

**Association/Club Welfare & Child Protection Officer:**  
.....

**Tel No:** .....

**AMA Welfare & Lead Child Protection Officer: Mr Peter Wright**

**Tel No: 07896262258**

**additional contact & role:** .....

**Tel No:** .....

**Police Station Contact:** .....

**Tel No:**.....

**Name of local hospital:** .....

**Tel No:** .....



### **Responding to the Child:**

- Do not panic – react calmly so as not to frighten the child
- Acknowledge that what the child is doing is difficult, but that they are right to confide in you.
- Reassure the child that they are not to blame.
- Make sure that, from the outset, you can understand what the child is saying.
- Be honest straight away and tell the child you cannot make promises that you will not be able to keep.
- Do not promise that you keep the conversation secret. Explain that you will need to involve other people and that you will need to write things down.
- Listen to and believe the child; take them seriously.
- Do not allow your shock or distaste to show.
- Keep any questions to a minimum, but do clarify any facts or words that you do not understand – do not speculate or make assumptions.
- Avoid closed questions (i.e. questions which invite yes or no answers).
- Do not probe for more information than is offered.
- Encourage the child, to use its own words.
- Do not make negative comments about the alleged abuser.
- End the disclosure and ensure that the child is either being collected or is capable of going home alone.
- Do not approach the alleged abuser.



False allegations of abuse do occur, but they are rare. You should always take immediate action if a child says or indicates that he or she is being abused, or you have reason to suspect that this is the case. This may involve dealing with the child, his parent or carer, colleagues at your club / organisation, teachers, external agencies or the media.

*The following guidelines are included in the AMA Child Protection Policy and Procedures, and it is **strongly** recommended they be incorporated into the framework of your own club / organisation*

Children who are being abused will only tell people they trust and with whom they feel safe. As a coach you will often share a close relationship with students and may therefore be the sort of person in whom a child might place their trust. **Children want the abuse to stop.** By listening and taking what a child is telling you seriously, you will already be helping to protect them.

*It is useful to think in advance about how you might respond to this situation in such a way as to avoid putting yourself at risk.*

### **Timing and Location:**

It is understandable that the child may want to see you alone, away from others. The child may therefore approach you at the end of a session when everyone is going home, or may arrive deliberately early at a time when they think you will not be busy. However, a disclosure is not just a quick chat, it will take time and usually has further consequences. Bear in mind that you may also need to attend to other students / children, check equipment or set up an activity – you cannot simply leave a session unattended. Therefore, try to arrange to speak to the child at an appropriate time.

Location is very important. Although it is important to respect the child's need for privacy, you also need to protect yourself against potential allegations. Do not listen to the child's disclosure in a completely private place – try to ensure that other members of staff are present or at least nearby.

All records should:

- Be written as soon as possible, signed and dated.
- Clearly distinguish between fact, observation, allegation and opinion
- Note the name, date, the event, a record of what was said, and any action taken in cases of suspected abuse
- Be held separately from main records
- Be exempt from open access



## **Allegations of Previous Abuse**

Allegations of abuse may be made some time after the event (e.g. by an adult who was abused as a child or abused by a member of staff who is still currently working with children).

Where such an allegation is made, the club should follow the procedures as detailed above and report the matter to the social services or the police. This is because other children, either within or outside sport, may be at risk from this person.

**Anyone who has a previous criminal conviction for offences related to abuse is automatically excluded from working with children. This is reinforced by the details of the Protection of Children Act 1999.**

## **Suspension and Internal Enquiries**

The **AMA** Lead Executive Officer on advice from the Lead Welfare & Child Protection Officer will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse or concerns relating to matters which fall within child protection and good practices, should be temporarily suspended pending further Police and or Social services inquiries.

Where such a temporarily suspension is imposed, the suspension shall be from any participation or activity connected in any way with Martial Arts and or AMA which will include but are not limited to the following: coaching, refereeing, judging, time keeping, scoring, chairmanship, presidency, management, board membership, teams, captaining, competing, secretarial duties or functions, treasurer, patron, first aiding, event organiser or assistant event organiser, administrative duty, Child Protection Officer, volunteer work and any other activity relating to Martial Arts, where there is a likelihood of contact with children or young persons.

Where a person is temporarily suspended and during the time of the suspension AMA are informed that a breach or abuse of the suspension is or has took place, that person will be served a written warning.

Failure to comply with or adhere to the terms of the written warning may result in the permanent disqualification of the said person from any and or all AMA activities.

## **Initial Action and Enquiries**

Upon receipt of any concerns complaints or disclosure an investigation into the concern complaint or disclosure may be necessary.

This might be in the form of a criminal investigation conducted by the Police and/or Social Services, and also an internal investigation by AMA.

If such an investigation discloses a breach of law then the AMA investigations will cease at that time and a referral made to the Police and/or Social Services.



Enquiries may fall within either of the following categories and as a result any one of, or all, may be instigated:

### **Child Welfare**

- I. An investigation by AMA may be instigated
- II. The individual concerned may be temporarily suspended, the extent of the suspension will be given, and in order to ensure the safety and welfare of children the individual has or may come into contact with.
- III. The individual may be informed of the suspension either verbally or in writing but if given verbally, confirmation in writing will be given within 48hours.
- IV. AMA membership and any associated benefits may be temporarily suspended.
- V. The individual may be required to undergo a specific DBS check.
- VI. The matter may be referred to a discipline committee for their consideration.

### **Child Protection / Poor Practice**

- I. Upon receipt of any concern or allegation referral will be made to the Police and /or Social Services for consideration as to whether a criminal or civil investigation into the concern/s or allegation is required.
- II. An investigation by AMA may be instigated
- III. The individual concerned may be temporarily suspended from any or all Martial Arts activities under the auspices of AMA, pending the outcome of any such Police, Social Services or Lado and or AMA investigation where such a suspension is warranted or deemed necessary by AMA to ensure the welfare and safety of any children or young people, where they are directly, or likely to, come into any contact with the individual in question.
- IV. The individual may be informed of the suspension either verbally or in writing but if given verbally, confirmation in writing will be given within 48hours. AMA membership and any associated benefits may be temporarily suspended.
- V. The individual may be required to undergo a DBS check.
- VI. The matter may be referred to a discipline committee for their consideration.



Irrespective of the findings of the Police or Social services inquiries, **AMA** Disciplinary Committee will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled.

This may be a difficult decision; particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, **AMA** Disciplinary Committee will reach a decision based upon the available information which could suggest that on a balance of probability it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. **The welfare of children should always remain paramount.**

### **Action if bullying is suspected**

The same procedure should be followed as set out in the Section relating to responding to suspicions or allegations, if bullying is suspected. All settings in which children are provided with services or are living away from home should have rigorously enforced anti-bullying strategies in place.

#### **Remember: In all Child Protection issues –**

**Maintain confidentiality on a NEED TO KNOW basis only.**

**Ensure the Association/Club Child Protection Officer follows up with Social services.**

**The Association/Club Child Protection Officer will also report the incident to the AMA Welfare & Lead Child Protection Officer who will advise, support and report as necessary.**