

## **Annabel Croft Tennis Academy (ACTA) Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures**

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### **1.0 Definitions**

- 1.1 In accordance with the Children Act 1989 and 2004, a child is any person who has not yet reached their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. For the purpose of these procedures the reference to children therefore means 'children and young people' throughout.

### **2.0 Policy Statement**

- 2.1 ACTA is committed to protecting the welfare of all children as they participate in ACTA's services and/or activities. ACTA understands its responsibility to comply with legislation, particularly to ensure that the welfare of children and young people is paramount, and will constantly monitor developments in this field. However, ACTA recognises that the best protection for children participating in our programmes is the vigilance and forethought of staff and volunteers in preventing circumstances where abuse of trust could occur. To that end, ACTA will strive to create a safe and secure environment where service users, volunteers and staff can work together confidently in mutual respect.
- ACTA also recognises its responsibility to take appropriate action when a child discloses that they are experiencing abuse or neglect, or if staff / volunteers have a concern about the welfare of a child, and to ensure staff / volunteers have an understanding of what might indicate this and what action to take.
- 2.2 This policy should be read in conjunction with the Wandsworth Council Safeguarding Children Procedures. These procedures reflect and are compliant with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010 and the following: the Education Act 2002, Every Child Matters: Change for Children Agenda, the Children Act 2004 and the National Service Framework (NSF) Children and Young People and Maternity Services.
- 2.3 ACTA staff and volunteers are required to abide by the staff member/volunteer Code of Conduct and, as part of that Code of Conduct, are required to notify ACTA of any police record or other factor which may make that person unsuitable to work with children.
- 2.4 ACTA will ensure that the Code of Conduct, and the organisation's safeguarding children procedures are continually monitored, developed and maintained and are appropriately communicated throughout the staff and volunteer network. Volunteers and staff throughout the organisation are responsible for ensuring that they are familiar with the codes, guidelines and procedures of the organisation, and that new staff and volunteers are appropriately inducted.
- 2.5 ACTA have appointed a Designated Safeguarding Person who will be responsible for the above, and will also be the person to whom any safeguarding children

concerns will, in the first instance, be reported to and who will then discuss and agree the appropriate action to take.

**ACTA Designated Safeguarding Person is:**

.....**Chris Marshall**.....

2.6 ACTA will maintain policies and procedures geared towards abuse prevention that include, but are not limited to the following topics:

- selection and vetting of staff and volunteers including DBS checks
- employee and volunteer disciplinary procedure
- staff and volunteer induction and training
- staff member and volunteer Code of Conduct
- whistleblowing policy / confidential reporting procedure.

2.7 All staff and volunteers will receive induction training, which will give an overview of the organisation and ensure they know its purpose, values, services and structure. Relevant training and support will be provided on an ongoing basis, and will cover information about their role, and opportunities for practising skills needed for the work.

2.8 Training on specific areas such as safeguarding children, identifying and reporting abuse, and confidentiality of personal information will be given as a priority to new staff and volunteers, and will be regularly reviewed.

**3 Action to be taken if a child or young person discloses to you abuse by someone else:**

3.1 If a child who is a service user approaches you about an issue of abuse, you must proceed with great caution.

3.2 The Staff/Volunteer Code of Conduct specifies that a staff member/ volunteer should not place him/herself in a situation where he/she is alone with a service user who is a child. However, it is possible that a service user will be unwilling to make disclosures of this nature in anything but a one-to-one situation. *The service user's needs must take priority in this situation.* Ask if the service user would like someone else to be present – an adult or a friend - but if he/she declines; proceed with the interview, taking extra care with your behaviour and body language.

3.3 Without stopping the child from disclosing, but if possible before the child goes into detail, explain the consequences of you knowing and the action you will take. Assure them that you will offer support but must pass any information to another professional who may take appropriate action. Explain that this may be the Designated Safeguarding Person, as identified in section 2, and Social Care.

- 3.4 Keep calm and listen to the child - do not have physical contact at any time. Allow the child to speak without interruption, accepting what is said.
- 3.5 Do not make judgements or offer opinion, and as soon as is practically possible make an accurate written record of what the child has said, being careful to use their own words as accurately as possible.
- 3.6 Explain again what will happen next. Find out when the child is next due to see the individual who is the subject of the complaint. (You will then be able to make a judgement as to the appropriate timing of your follow-up actions to ensure that the child remains safe.)
- 3.7 If the complaint concerns a situation not related to ACTA (e.g. at home or at school), refer the complaint directly to the Designated Safeguarding Person. Pass on all information disclosed to you by the child.
- 3.8 If the complaint concerns a ACTA staff member/volunteer, staff member or adult where the contact between that individual is a direct result of ACTA activity, immediately inform the Named Senior Officer as identified in section 4 who will then initiate the procedure.
- 3.9 Concerns about the welfare of a child, including the possibility of abuse or neglect, may also be raised by behaviour or other indicators noticed by a member of staff / volunteer, but not disclosed by the child. In these instances, it is equally important to take action, and these concerns should be raised and discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Person.

#### **4 Procedures for dealing with suspected abuse by staff members/volunteers:**

- 4.1 When dealing with issues concerning abuse by an adult in a position of trust, Trustees / Committee Members must remember that the welfare of the children participating in ACTA is paramount, but that we also have a responsibility to ensure that our staff & volunteers are treated fairly and with respect. This procedure is designed to meet both those objectives. The management committee or Board of Trustees should ensure that every member is fully aware of these procedures.
- 4.2 The first requirement of these procedures is for each organisation to identify a Named Senior Officer to whom such concerns should be, in the first instance, reported. (Wherever possible, this should be a different person to the Designated Safeguarding Person).

#### **4.3 ACTA Named Senior Officer is**

.....**Steve Cockell**.....

**If this person is unavailable or is the subject of the allegation, then the alternative person to contact is:**

.....**Mel Coleman**.....

4.4 On receipt of a concern when an individual may have:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- behaved in a way that indicates s/he may not be suitable to work with children

the Named Senior Officer will contact the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) who will consider, with the Named Senior Officer, the most appropriate way forward. **It is essential that nothing is done to investigate the concern before contacting the LADO as this can contaminate evidence if a police investigation is deemed appropriate.**

4.5 If the concern does not meet the above criteria, but involves other inappropriate behaviour by the staff member / volunteer then this will be dealt with through the ACTA Disciplinary Procedure.

4.6 It is also important to ensure that both the child and the alleged perpetrator receive appropriate support through this procedure. For the child this should in the first instance be provided by their parents / carers who may need some support to do this. The staff member / volunteer should be encouraged to get support from a union representative, friend, or another identified member of staff / volunteer.

## 5. Action to be taken if you receive an allegation about yourself.

5.1 Keep calm. Do not get involved in an argument which is likely to make the situation worse.

5.2 Immediately inform your line manager and the Named Senior Officer. The quicker that action is taken to investigate the allegations, the sooner the situation will be resolved.

5.3 Record the facts as you understand them.

5.4 Ensure that no-one is placed in a position which could cause further compromise. Do not contact another agency involved with the child or young person concerned.

## 6. Confidentiality

6.1 Whatever the nature of the complaint, it must be kept confidential. You must not discuss the disclosure with any individual or party other than those identified in the above procedure.

Signed:

Position:

Date:

Review Date