

# InnovationBen Child Protection Policy Statement

## Policy aims

The aim of the InnovationBen Protection Policy is to promote good practice:

- + Providing children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of InnovationBen.
- + Allow all volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.

## Policy Statement

InnovationBen aims to create an enjoyable environment for all young people who wish to take part in school workshops, summer schools and the after school club both online and in person.

InnovationBen emphasises that young people have a right to be safe, secure, and free from threat.

InnovationBen acknowledges that young people have a right to be treated with respect and their concerns to be listened to and acted upon.

InnovationBen will ensure that young people have a specific programme and facilities designated for them with adequate supervision.

InnovationBen will ensure that the facilitators are aware of this Child Protection Policy and that there will be further developments in the future e.g. Attendance at courses on Child Protection and the need for appropriate vetting. All facilitators and others responsible for young people will sign the InnovationBen self declaration form in relation to Child Protection.

InnovationBen will ensure that any members and volunteers working with young people are aware of and apply the principles of this Child Protection Policy at all times and have signed the Self declaration form in respect of Child Protection.

InnovationBen has an adult member who is specifically responsible for young people.

InnovationBen has procedures in place to help any young person who requests help and support on a confidential basis, in issues relating to Child Protection.

## Designated Child Protection Officer

The designated Child Protection Officer has full discretion on matters which may be brought to his or her attention, he or she will act with total confidentiality on issues which are extremely sensitive to the persons involved.

They will be available for any member, parent or others who are in attendance at InnovationBen who may have concern for the well being of a young person.

The Child Protection Officer is responsible for the protection of the young people of InnovationBen and will be open to easy contact by any person, who may have reasonable suspicion that abuse is taking place.

Please speak with him or her if you suspect a young member is at risk of any form of abuse while taking part in InnovationBen activities or workshops both physical and online and at any InnovationBen facilities both now and in the future.

## **Promoting good practice**

Child abuse, particularly sexual abuse, can arouse strong emotions in those facing such a situation. It is important to understand these feelings and not allow them to interfere with your judgement about the appropriate action to take.

Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school and afterschool clubs. Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with young people in order to harm them. A coach, instructor, teacher, official or volunteer will have regular contact with young people and be an important link in identifying cases where they need protection. All suspicious cases of poor practice should be reported following the guidelines in this document.

When a child enters the workshop having been subjected to child 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.

## **Good practice guidelines**

All personnel should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from false allegations. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

Those working with or for InnovationBen will:

1. Be professional and always maintain the highest standards of personal behaviour.
2. Be aware of situations, which can be misconstrued or manipulated by others, for example if the Instructor, or Official is alone with a child in the workshop facilities, classroom or other similar places, they are open to the possibility of allegations about their behaviour.
3. Be vigilant and aware of how actions can be misinterpreted.

4. Not appear to show more interest in one child than another.
5. Be very aware that physical handling, perhaps to develop understanding of a particular technique can be misconstrued by an observer or even the student.
6. Never swear, use, or respond to sexual innuendo.
7. Design and use training methods which are wholly appropriate for all members but when necessary individual members.
8. Ensure that, as far as possible, they are not alone when working with young students on an individual basis, if this is unavoidable then the parents should be made aware of the situation for the sake of the Instructor or Official. This also means that the children should not be alone in cars or homes with an Instructor or official on a regular basis. The presence of others is an insurance against false accusations.
9. Conduct all dealings with children in an open 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, two adults should always be present if a child's room is visited and the door should be left open during the visit.
11. Report any concerns within the area of Child Protection (physical, emotional, sexual, or neglect), in confidence and without delay to the designated Child Protection Officer 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 the designated Child Protection Officer or other 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 any comment to the media. The InnovationBen Child Protection Officer should be made aware of any media interest in relation to Child Protection.
15. In the event of an allegation or improper behaviour being made, understand that the personal and professional behaviour of the adult will be important evidence. For child abuse to take place, in particular sexual abuse, the child or adult(s) will generally be alone or away from public view. Thus the best defence is to avoid all situations in which behaviour can not be observed.

## Practices to be avoided

The following should be avoided except in emergencies. If a case arises where these situations are unavoidable (e.g. the 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), it should be with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge in the club or the child's parents.

Otherwise, **avoid**:

- + Spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others.
- + Taking or dropping off a child to an event or activity.

## Practices never to be sanctioned

The following should **never** be sanctioned. You should **never**:

- + 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, particularly if they are young or are disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parents and the members involved. There is a need to be responsive to a person's reactions. 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 or assisting a child to carry out particular activities. Avoid taking on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained.

## Incidents that must be reported/recorded

**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 informed:**

- + If you accidentally hurt a junior member
- + If he/she seems distressed in any manner
- + If a junior member appears to be sexually aroused by your actions
- + If a junior member misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.

## **Use of photographic/filming equipment at innovation sessions**

InnovationBen, with full permission of parents/guardians photographs, records and films a range of workshop based activities for use in its publicity materials and other resources.

1. InnovationBen will not include full names (which means both first name and surname) of any individual in any digital and/or printed materials.
2. InnovationBen will not include personal contact details such as email and postal addresses, telephone or fax numbers of any individual to these materials.
3. If InnovationBen uses any images of individuals it will not use the full name of that individual in the accompanying text, photo caption or film credits unless express permission has been sought by INNOVATION BEN. INNOVATION BEN does not accept any responsibility if you are recognised from the image by members of the public.
4. InnovationBen may use the image of any individual to illustrate any wording other than the name of the individual represented in the image used. No wording shall be considered to be attributed to the individual in the image.
5. InnovationBen may use group images with general labels, such as 'INVENTOR CLUB GROUP SESSIONS' etc.
6. InnovationBen will only use images of individuals who are suitably dressed, to reduce the risk of such images being used inappropriately.
7. InnovationBen will ensure photographs or videos are stored safely encrypted where possible.

## **Recruitment and training of volunteers**

InnovationBen 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.

### **Pre-selection checks must include the following:**

- + All volunteers/staff should complete an application form. The application form will elicit information about an applicant's past and a self-disclosure about any criminal record.
- + Consent should be obtained from an applicant to seek information from the Criminal Records Bureau.
- + Two confidential references, including one regarding previous work with children.
- + These references must be taken up and confirmed through telephone contact.

- + Evidence of identity should be provided (e.g. passport or driving licence with photo).

## **Interview and induction**

**All employees (and volunteers) will be required to undergo an interview carried out to acceptable protocol and recommendations. All employees and volunteers should receive formal or informal induction, during which:**

- + A check should be made that the application form has been completed in full (including sections on criminal records and self-disclosures).
- + Their qualifications should be substantiated.
- + The job requirements and responsibilities should be clarified.
- + They should sign up to the InnovationBen Standards & Expectations.
- + Child protection procedures are explained, and training needs are identified.

## **Training**

**In addition to pre-selection checks, the safeguarding process includes training after recruitment to help staff and volunteers to:**

- + Analyse their own practice against established good practice, and to ensure their practice is likely to protect them from false allegations.
- + Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice or possible abuse.
- + Respond to concerns expressed by a child or young person. + Work safely and effectively with Children.

## **InnovationBen requires:**

- + Volunteers to have completed a recognised awareness training on child protection.
- + Relevant personnel to receive advisory information outlining good practice and informing them about what to do if they have concerns about the behaviour of an adult towards a young person.
- + Relevant personnel to undergo national first aid training (where necessary).
- + Attendance of update training when necessary.

## **Responding to allegations or suspicions**

It is not the responsibility of anyone working in InnovationBen, in a paid or unpaid capacity, to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities.

InnovationBen will assure all staff/volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone who in good faith reports his/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 3 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**

### **1. Concerns about poor practice:**

- + If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice, the Child Protection Officer will deal with it as a misconduct issue.
- + If the allegation is about poor practice by the Child Protection Officer, or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to the relevant officer who will decide how to deal with the allegation and whether or not to initiate disciplinary proceedings.

### **2. Concerns about suspected abuse:**

- + Any suspicion that a child has been abused by either a member of staff or a volunteer should be reported to the 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 Child Protection Officer will refer the allegation to the social services department which may involve the police or go directly to the police if out-of-hours.
- + The parents or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social services department.
- + If the Child Protection Officer is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to the appropriate Chief Innovator who will refer the allegation to social services

## **Confidentiality**

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need-to-know basis only.

### **This includes the following people:**

- + The Child Protection Officer
- + The parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused
- + The person making the allegation
- + Social services/police
- + The alleged abuser (and parents if the alleged abuser is a child).

Seek social services advice on who should approach the alleged abuser.

Information should 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).

## **Support to deal with the aftermath of abuse**

- ✚ Consideration should be given to the kind of support that children, parents and members of staff may need. Use of help lines, support groups and open meetings will maintain an open culture and help the healing process. The British Association for Counselling Directory is available from The British Association for Counselling, 1 Regent Place, Rugby CV21 2PJ, Tel: 01788 550899, Fax: 01788 562189, Email: bac@bacp.co.uk, Internet: [www.bacp.co.uk](http://www.bacp.co.uk)
  
- ✚ Consideration should be given to what kind of support may be appropriate for the alleged perpetrator.

## **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 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 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.

## **Action if bullying is suspected**

If bullying is suspected, the same procedure should be followed as set out in 'Responding to suspicions or allegations' above.

## **Action to help the victim and prevent bullying in Innovation sessions:**

- ✚ Take all signs of bullying very seriously.
- ✚ Encourage all children to speak and share their concerns (It is believed that up to 12 children per year commit suicide because of bullying, so if anyone talks about or threatens suicide, seek professional help immediately). Help the victim to speak out and tell the person in charge or someone in authority.
- ✚ Investigate all allegations and take action to ensure the victim is safe. Speak with the victim and the bully(ies) separately.
- ✚ Reassure the victim that you can be trusted and will help them, although you cannot promise to tell no one else.
- ✚ Keep records of what is said (what happened, by whom, when).
- ✚ Report any concerns to the Child Protection Officer.

### **Action towards the bully(ies):**

- ✚ Talk with the bully(ies), explain the situation, and try to get the bully(ies) to understand the consequences of their behaviour. Seek an apology to the victim(s).
- ✚ Inform the bully(ies)'s parents.
- ✚ Insist on the return of 'borrowed' items and that the bully(ies) compensate the victim.
- ✚ Impose sanctions as necessary.
- ✚ Encourage and support the bully(ies) to change behaviour.
- ✚ Hold meetings with the families to report on progress.
- ✚ Inform all organisation members of action taken.
- ✚ Keep a written record of action taken.

### **3. Concerns outside the immediate workshop environment (e.g. a parent or carer):**

- ✚ Report your concerns to the Child Protection Officer, who should contact social services or the police as soon as possible.
- ✚ See 4. below for the information social services or the police will need.
- ✚ If the Child Protection Officer is not available, the person being told of or discovering the abuse should contact social services or the police immediately.
- ✚ Social services and the Child Protection Officer will decide how to involve the parents/carers.
- ✚ The Child Protection Officer should also report the incident to the governing body. The governing body should ascertain whether or not the person/(s) involved in the incident play a role and act accordingly.
- ✚ Maintain confidentiality on a need-to-know basis only.
- ✚ See 4. below regarding information needed for social services.

### **4. Information for social services or the police about suspected abuse:**

To ensure that this information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern, which should include the following:

- ✚ The child's name, age and date of birth of the child.
- ✚ The child's home address and telephone number.
- ✚ Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else.
- ✚ 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.
- ✚ A description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Also, any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes.
- ✚ Details of witnesses to the incidents.
- ✚ 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.
- + If the child was not the person who reported the incident, has the child been spoken to? If so, what was said?
- + Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details.
- + Where possible, referral to the police or social services should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours and the name of the contact who took the referral should be recorded.

If you are worried about sharing concerns about abuse with a senior colleague, you can contact social services or the police directly, or the **NSPCC Child Protection Helpline** on **0808 800 5000**, or **Childline** on **0800 1111**.

## Declaration

On behalf of InnovationBen, we, the undersigned, will oversee the implementation of the Child Protection Policy and take all necessary steps to ensure it is adhered to.

Signed   
Name: Becky Edmonds  
Position: Child Protection Officer  
Date: 13th September 2017