

# **Safeguarding Policy**

**Protecting children & vulnerable adults**



**OnThisROC**

**BUILDING COMMUNITY  
ON A FIRM FOUNDATION**



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## **Introduction**

OnThisROC CIC (OTR) believes that child welfare is the responsibility of everyone. Unfortunately forms of abuse can occur anywhere where children and vulnerable adults are.

All responsible organisations involved in working with young people and vulnerable adults need a Safeguarding Policy (CPP). It is designed to both protect young people and vulnerable adults and support those who look after them. This document gives clear guidance on the identification and procedures for dealing with both potential and actual abuse. It should also act as a guide in helping OTR staff and volunteers create a safe environment for young people and vulnerable adults and protect themselves against allegations of improper behaviour. OTR believes that both these points are very important and it is against this backdrop that this document has been produced. It is mandatory for all OTR staff and volunteers working with young people and vulnerable adults to comply with this policy and guidelines. These guidelines should enhance what is already a highly valuable service.

## **Policy Statement**

OTR recognises that all children and vulnerable adults have the right to be protected from harm and live in a safe environment.

OTR has a duty of care to safeguard all children and vulnerable adults involved in OTR activities from harm. All children and vulnerable adults have the right to protection and the needs of children and vulnerable adults from all backgrounds and abilities must be taken into account. OTR will ensure the safety and protection of all children and vulnerable adults involved in its activities through adherence to its Safeguarding Policy and procedures.

OTR will support anyone who, in good faith, reports his or her concerns that a child or vulnerable adult is at risk of, or may actually be, being abused.

## **Principles**

The following principles underpin OTR Safeguarding Policy:

- To provide children and vulnerable adults and young people and vulnerable adults with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care and responsibility of OTR.
- To allow all staff/volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific safeguarding issues.
- All suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- A child is defined as an individual under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989).
- A vulnerable adult is defined as a person aged 18 years or over who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or maybe unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation (Department of Health, 2000).
- To help and support all individuals involved in providing activities for young people and vulnerable adults on behalf of OTR.
- To give guidance and support, when required, to all organisations and individuals involved in providing climbing and mountaineering activities for young people and vulnerable adults.
- That all children and vulnerable adults, regardless of ethnic origin or disability, have the right to live in a safe environment.
- That the welfare of the child or vulnerable adult is paramount and will underpin all guidance.
- This guidance is mandatory for all staff and volunteers.

## **What Is Abuse?**

‘Abuse’ is a term used to describe ways in which children and vulnerable adults are harmed. Abuse may result from action or inaction by a volunteer or paid helper, family member or another young person. The Children Act (1989) states that there are four main types of abuse: Physical, Emotional, Sexual and Neglect. These are outlined below.

### **Physical Abuse**

Where adults physically hurt or injure children or vulnerable adults. In a climbing/mountaineering situation this might occur if the child or vulnerable adult is forced to train or climb beyond his or her capabilities. It may also occur if the training disregards the capacities of the child’s immature and growing body. In more extreme cases this can take the form of physical attack i.e. hitting, shaking, burning or biting them.

### **Emotional Abuse**

Occurs when a child or vulnerable adult is not given love, help and encouragement and is constantly derided or ridiculed. It can occur, conversely, if a child or vulnerable adult is over protected preventing them from socializing. In a sporting/climbing context this may be present in the unrealistic expectations of what a child or vulnerable adult can achieve by parents/guardians, coaches or even fellow climbers. This can also occur in the undermining of a young person or adult through ridicule. This abuse often manifests itself in the form of bullying (See section “Action to Prevent Bullying” page 8).

### **Sexual Abuse**

Occurs when a child or vulnerable adult knowingly or unknowingly takes part in an activity which meets the sexual needs of those involved who are responsible for them. It could range from sexually suggestive comments to physical sexual activities. Exposing young people and vulnerable adults to pornography is also a form of sexual abuse. In a sporting context this may take the form of photography or videoing for the sexual gratification of the viewer. Coaches and volunteers are often placed in a position of great trust and it is when this trust is abused that sexual abuse can occur. (See section “Guidelines for the Use of Photography”).

### **Neglect**

This includes situations in which adults fail to meet the basic physical needs of a young person or vulnerable adult (e.g. food, warm clothing). This may involve the lack of medical attention or consistently leaving children and vulnerable adults alone and unsupervised or monitored. Neglect can also occur if a supervisor fails to ensure children and vulnerable adults are safe or exposes them to undue cold or risk of injury. This has obvious implications for those taking young people and vulnerable adults into potentially hostile mountain environments.

Abuse in all its forms can affect a child or vulnerable adult at any age. The effects can be so damaging that if not treated they may follow a young person into adulthood. For example an adult who has been abused may find it difficult to maintain a stable and trusting relationship.

**OTR will support anyone who in good faith reports his or her concerns that a child or vulnerable adult is at risk.**

## Possible Signs of Abuse

Even for those experienced at working with abused children or vulnerable adults it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already occurred. OTR acknowledges that its staff and volunteers are **not necessarily experts** at such recognition. OTR therefore expects them to discuss any concern they may have with regards to the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult immediately with the person in charge (see section “What You Should Do Next”). If this is not practical and the situation is deemed to be too serious to delay then advice can be sought from Social Services or the police.

Below are listed some of the characteristics which may be evidence of abuse. These are by no means exhaustive and are only indicators of potential abuse, **not** confirmation.

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to injury.
- An injury of which the explanation seems inconsistent.
- The child or vulnerable adult describes what appears to be an abusive act involving them.
- Unexplained behaviour changes e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn, or displaying sudden outbursts of temper.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness.
- Distrustful of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
- Difficulty making friends.
- A child or vulnerable adult being prevented from socialising with other children and adults.
- Displaying variation in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite.
- Becoming increasingly unkempt or dirty.

It must be recognised that the presence of one or more of these indicators is not proof that actual abuse is taking place. **It is not** the responsibility of those involved in OTR activities to decide whether abuse of a child or vulnerable adult is occurring **but it is their responsibility to act upon any concerns** (see section “What You Should Do Next”).



## **Raising Awareness**

It is understandable that people who are well motivated, caring individuals with a commitment to climbing and mountaineering, are reluctant to believe that children and vulnerable adults may be suffering harm in a climbing environment or at home. It may be difficult to accept that children and vulnerable adults could be at risk because of the way an organisation or its events are run.

Levels of awareness need to be raised without creating an atmosphere of anxiety or suspicion. However a basic principle should be:

**If you become aware of anything which causes you to feel uncomfortable, you should speak to either an OTR staff member or contact the OTR director appointed responsible for youth.**

This means being aware of attitudes of staff and volunteers and of the interactions between them. Certain modes of behaviour may be excused by comments such as:

“He/ She is always like that” or

“We have just come to expect that from him/her but what can you do?”

If the behaviour gives rise to concern or is directly contrary to accepted good practice then some type of action must be taken. Adults should also seek to help and support each other in avoiding situations of bad practice. This is achievable the more open and co-operative a working environment is. If a young person or vulnerable adult behaves in a way that gives rise to concern then this may be an indicator of a problem. There may well be a perfectly acceptable explanation for this behaviour. It is however important to act on a concern and ascertain that this is the case. If it is still felt there may be a problem it is important to seek further help.

## **What is Bullying?**

Bullying is one of the most common forms of abuse. It would not be too unrealistic to conclude that most people have been a victim of bullying in some form at one time or another. For some children and vulnerable adults bullying can be taken to the extreme and can make their lives intolerable. Bullying is something that needs to be taken very seriously. It is not acceptable for adults to dismiss bullying as a simple part of growing up. There is sufficient evidence to show that the consequences of bullying can be devastating both to the victim and their family.

There are three main types of bullying:

- Physical, e.g. hitting, kicking or theft
- Verbal, e.g. racist or homophobic remarks
- Emotional, e.g. persistent negative feedback

All these will include:

- Deliberate hostility and aggression towards the victim
- A victim who is weaker and less powerful than the bully or bullies
- An outcome which is always painful and distressing for the victims

Bullying behaviour may include:

- Other forms of violence
- Sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing
- Torment, ridicule, humiliation
- Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Unwanted physical contact or abusive, offensive comments of a sexual nature

Within climbing there are potential situations where bullying can take place:

- A parent/guardian who pushes too hard
- A coach who adopts a “win at all cost” philosophy
- A climber who intimidates others
- Unwanted peer pressure from other climbers to do routes that are too hard or dangerous

It is important that all those involved in OTR activities are aware of OTR’s antibullying policy which follows below, and it is mandatory for them to adhere to this.



## **OTR Anti-Bullying Policy**

Bullying can take many forms and is usually repeated over a period of time. The three main types of bullying are: physical, verbal and emotional, all these forms of bullying include:

- Deliberate hostility and aggression towards the victim.
- A victim who is weaker than the bully.
- An outcome that is painful and distressing to the victim.

Bullying behaviour may include:

- Other forms of violence.
- Tormenting, ridiculing, humiliation.
- Racial abuse.
- Unwanted physical contact or abusive or offensive comments of a physical nature.

In a climbing context emotional bullying is most likely to be found rather than physical violence. This is often difficult to define or prove, it is important that all those involved in OTR activities subscribe to and accept this policy. All involved should be prepared to:

- Take all signs of bullying very seriously.
- Encourage all children and vulnerable adults to speak and share their concerns. (It is believed that up to 12 children per year commit suicide as a result 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.
- Create an open environment.
- 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, but do not promise that you will not tell anyone else.
- Keep records of what is said (e.g. what happened, by whom, when).
- Report any concerns to the appropriate person in charge and ensure that the
- OTR Director responsible for Youth is informed.

### **Possible actions toward the bullies:**

- 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's parents.
- Insist on the return of any borrowed items and seek to establish how the victim is to be compensated for any damage caused.
- Provide support for the coach of the victim.
- Impose sanctions as necessary.
- Encourage and support the bully(ies) to change behaviour.
- Hold meetings with the families to report on progress.

## How to Respond to a Disclosure, Suspicion or Allegation

***“If there is a concern about the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult, or the behaviour of an adult the one thing not to do is do nothing”***

Safeguarding (policy and guidelines) MCoFl 2003

A child or vulnerable adult in your care may indicate to you that they are being abused in some way or information may come to you of possible abuse. On receiving this information you should;

- React calmly- do not rush into inappropriate action. What you are told may be very shocking but it is important you give the child or vulnerable adult some stability;
- Reassure the child or vulnerable adult that they are not to blame and that they did the right thing to tell someone, i.e. you, about the incident;
- Take the child or vulnerable adult seriously and listen carefully to them. Recognise how difficult it was for them to tell you;
- Only ask questions which help to clarify the situation. Do not question any more than is strictly necessary. The law is very strict when it suspects a child or vulnerable adult has been led or ideas have been suggested;
- If possible allow only one adult to talk to the child or vulnerable adult to begin with. It is possible that discrepancies in the account of what has happened can, in the event of the allegation being referred, lead to legal complications later;
- Try not to make the child or vulnerable adult repeat their account unnecessarily;
- Do not make promises you cannot keep. Explain that you may have to tell other people in order to stop what is happening but that you will endeavour to keep the incident as confidential as possible;
- Make a full record of what has been said, heard or seen as soon as possible.

Do Not:

- Take sole responsibility for further action (**see section “What You Should Do Next”**)
- Approach or try to contact the alleged abuser
- Ignore what has happened
- Make promises you cannot keep

## Recording information

Information that is passed on to OTR, Social Services and police must be as helpful as possible. Hence there is a necessity for making as detailed record as possible. This should endeavour to contain:

- The nature of the incident;
- A description of any visible injuries;
- The account of the child/vulnerable adult;
- Times, dates or other relevant information;
- A clear distinction between what is fact, hearsay and opinion;
- A record using OTR's Safeguarding Incident form (see Appendix).

After attaining this information do not hesitate to pass it on to the relevant organisation (see flow charts in the **“What You Should Do Next”** section).

## Allegations of previous abuse

Allegations of abuse may be made a long 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 and vulnerable adults). Where such an allegation is made the procedures in section **“What You Should Do Next”** should be followed and when appropriate Social Services or the police will be informed. This is important as children and vulnerable adults may still be at risk from the accused individual should the allegation be proved to be correct.

## **What You Should Do Next?**

### **Concerns about poor practice and possible abuse within an OTR setting**

This relates to all those involved within OTR activities.

Concerns and allegations about the abuse of a child or vulnerable adult require very careful handling and should be treated with the strictest confidence. Any form of abuse can ultimately result in a criminal conviction. It is important to keep an open mind and that all allegations are kept in the strictest practical confidence. It is important you act on your concerns.

If the concern is clearly about poor practice see the “**Poor Practice**” section.

If the concern/allegation is suspected abuse and relates to an OTR volunteer, official or member of staff it should be reported to the OTR Managing Director and the OTR Director responsible for Youth who may in turn refer it to Social Services or the Police.

Concerns over members of the public may be referred directly to Social Services.

In all cases the OTR Director responsible for Youth and the Managing Director should be informed. If the allegation is against one of these two people then the report should be given to a Director not involved.

**Following advice from Social Services** the parents or carers of the child or vulnerable adult will be informed by the OTR Managing Director or the Director responsible for Youth. Where there is concern for the safety of the child or vulnerable adult Social Services or the Police will contact the child’s parents. Where there is an allegation against a parent the police or Social Services will contact the family.

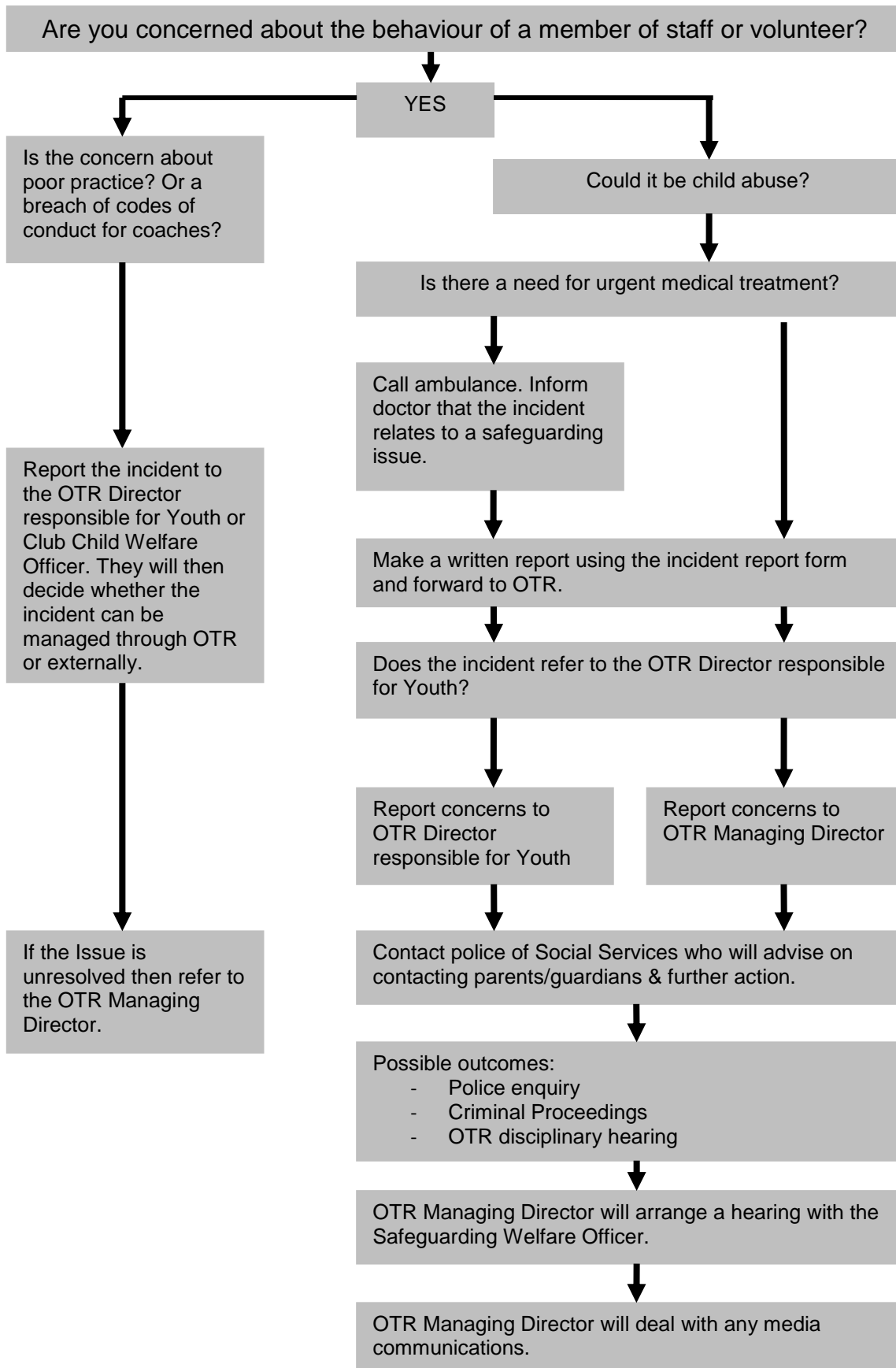
The member of staff or volunteer will then be notified that an allegation has been made and where appropriate suspended from his/her duties.

**If you are in any doubt or do not feel confident in sharing your concerns with a senior colleague you should seek advice from Police and Social Services.**

**Alternatively you can contact the NSPCC 24hr help line on 0800 800 500.**

Depending on the course of action decided upon by OTR, and after consulting with the relevant professional care services, the flow chart overleaf sets out what will occur.

Dealing with concerns, disclosure or allegations about OTR staff, coaches or volunteers.



## Concerns about abuse outside an OTR setting

If this happens you should ensure the safety of the young person or vulnerable adult. If he or she requires immediate attention call an ambulance, inform a doctor of your concerns and ensure that they are aware that this is a safeguarding issue.

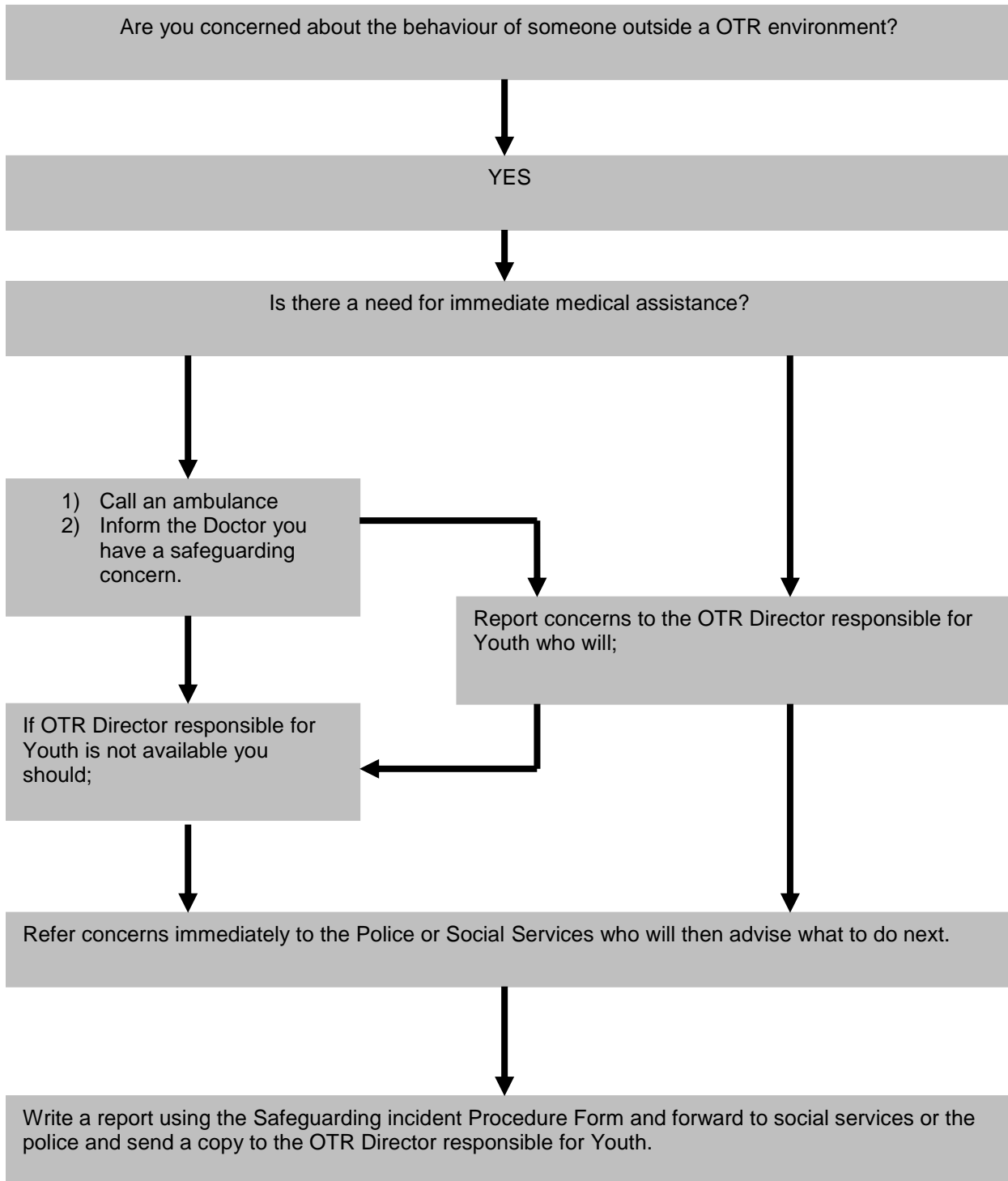
OTR procedures should then be followed (**please see the flow chart on the next page**). You should refer your concerns to the OTR managing director or the OTR Director responsible for Youth.

If a formal referral is made make it clear that it is a safeguarding issue. All police forces have a specialised Safeguarding Unit which deals with allegations of abuse within the family and by people in positions of trust. In a real emergency, or if completely unsure as to what to do, phone 999.

Parents/carers should only be contacted **after** advice from Social Services. In all cases it is important that the welfare of the child or vulnerable adult is paramount and that it can be especially difficult for children and vulnerable adults from an ethnic minority or who are disabled to disclose abuse to others. Adults should be especially vigilant with these groups and be aware that their own prejudices may block them from believing these groups. It is important to give thought as to how adults respond in these situations.

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT EVERY EFFORT IS MADE TO MAINTAIN CONFIDENTIALITY.

Dealing with possible abuse occurring outside a OTR setting



## **Internal Enquiries and Suspension**

In the event of OTR being informed of an allegation of poor practice, bullying or abuse against a person involved in OTR activities the Managing Director/Chair of the board of directors will arrange a meeting of the Safeguarding Referral Group (CPRG). This group will decide which of these categories the incident falls within and what action is to be taken. The person accused may be asked to stand down pending the outcome of any investigation by the statutory authorities. It should be made clear to this person that this is only a precautionary measure and will not prejudice any later disciplinary procedure.

Irrespective of the findings of any criminal and safeguarding enquiries, a disciplinary sub-committee of the Safeguarding Referral Group will assess all individual cases to decide whether a volunteer or member of staff will be reinstated and how this can be handled.

This may be a difficult decision, particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. The disciplinary sub-committee will need to base its decision on the facts of the case and the findings of any investigation by the Social Services department and where applicable the outcome of a prosecution by the Police. It is important that OTR is seen to provide support to an individual where an accusation of abuse has been shown to be false. In cases where there is insufficient evidence for prosecution the sub-committee may consider that on the balance of probability an incident has occurred. Nevertheless the sub-committee must attend to the facts as reported by the investigating authority and their reasons for not taking the matter further. The responsibility of the disciplinary sub-committee is to agree the best way forward and to carry out whatever disciplinary measures they consider to be appropriate. In this they will have to regard the welfare of the young person/s above all else.

The Safeguarding Referral Group will include OTR Managing Director, OTR Director responsible for Youth, members of the Executive Committee, an independent outside advisor from Social Services and selected OTR members with specialised knowledge.

### **What happens if you are accused of an abusive action?**

In the event of an accusation:

- Make notes of all your actions/contacts with the child or vulnerable adult in question as soon as possible.
- Seek access to professional and legal advice.
- Ensure that you are no longer working with the child/children and vulnerable adults making the allegation
- Follow the procedures laid out in this and supporting documents.
- Accept that colleagues may not be in a position to discuss the matter with you while the investigation is underway.
- Accept that you may be suspended from working with any young people and vulnerable adults.

Such events are difficult for all concerned. OTR will do its utmost to remain impartial in all matters relating to an accusation. The main concern with any incident is the welfare of the child/ vulnerable adult. For an individual, against whom an allegation has been made this will be a difficult time. There are no easy ways to deal with such a situation, it is important that you seek help and support.





## Poor Practice

Poor practice constitutes anything that is contradictory to OTR Safeguarding Policy document, OTR equity policy or any of the guidance outlined in supporting OTR documentation. Poor practice may also be a failure to follow event guidelines, so putting children and vulnerable adults in danger, or emergency procedures where an accident has occurred or is deemed likely to occur in the future. A combination of minor incidents could also be regarded as poor practice. If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice by a volunteer, parent or member of staff, OTR Director responsible for Youth, OTR Managing Director will deal with it as a misconduct issue. If the allegation is about poor practice by OTR Director responsible for Youth or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to the relevant OTR Officer and/or OTR Managing Director who will decide how to deal with the allegation and whether or not to initiate disciplinary proceedings.

A Safeguarding Incident Form (CPIF) should be completed and a copy sent to the relevant OTR Officer. If necessary, OTR will refer the matter to OTR Safeguarding Referral Group. Please also refer to OTR **Procedures for Dealing with Poor Practice (Appendix 3)**.

## **Good Practice**

OTR volunteers and staff, particularly those involved in climbing activities, will be working in an environment where a “hands on approach” may sometimes be necessary. Ensure that such contact is kept to the safe minimum, done openly, in response to the child’s needs, and is within the knowledge and consent of the child or vulnerable adult and their parent/ carer. There may, in extreme circumstances, be situations where reasonable force may be used as restraint i.e. self-defence, preventing risk or injury or damage to property. Please record any such incident and report it to the OTR Director responsible for Youth or OTR Managing Director.

Below are outlined guidelines, ideas and suggestions that help to create a safe environment for children and vulnerable adults. They should also help in ensuring that a child or vulnerable adult or others do not misinterpret the behaviour of adults. In the first section OTR’s responsibilities and the responsibilities of any club directly involved with working with young people and vulnerable adults are outlined.

### **Good practice procedures**

OTR is responsible for its safeguarding policy and implementation. Individual clubs who are involved with young people and vulnerable adults are required to work within this guidance. They are also encouraged to produce their own guidance and ensure that all members are aware of procedures and guidelines for good practice.

OTR Director responsible for Youth will act as the National Child Welfare Officer.

OTR will publicise its safeguarding guidelines to show its commitment to providing a safe environment for young people and vulnerable adults.

Clubs are advised to follow OTR procedures in the event of an incident.

OTR will provide guidance and training for adults who work with young people and vulnerable adults.

Parents should be clear what OTR are doing and that the activities are being run in relation to accepted good practice.

All adults who work with young people and vulnerable adults on a regular basis should be CRB checked.

OTR ensure that its guidelines on the use of photography are adhered to.

OTR will develop and promote their anti-bullying policy.

OTR will monitor coaches and provide them with feedback with respect to good practice guidelines.

### **Good practice for adults working with young climbers**

- Staff and volunteers must respect the rights, dignity and worth of all. They must also treat everyone with equality.
- Climbing coaches and supervisors should ensure that the welfare of any young climber is paramount and that the activity should be fun.
- They should think about:
  - Not over-climbing, or over-training, young climbers.
  - Young people and vulnerable adults climb because they enjoy it. Remember winning a competition may be only part of that enjoyment.
  - Motivate young people and vulnerable adults through positive feedback and constructive criticism.

- Ensure young climbers climb in an environment where inherent risk is kept to a minimum and is within accepted guidelines.
- Never allow young climbers to climb when injured.
- Ensure all equipment is appropriate and in good condition.
- It is important when supervising young people and vulnerable adults to avoid situations where an adult and an individual child or vulnerable adult are completely unobserved e.g. when climbing at a crag on a youth meet.
- If physical support is required e.g. spotting, support when bouldering, ensure the individual is aware of what is happening and has consented to this physical help. Some parents /carers are becoming increasingly sensitive about this type of help and their views should be respected at all times.
- When supervising young people and vulnerable adults in changing area adults should ideally work in pairs. Always check before entering a changing area that everyone is decent. Ideally parents/ carers should take responsibility for their own child or vulnerable adult in these situations.
- Encourage an open environment, always explain why you are doing something and try to facilitate, as far as is practical, an open and inclusive approach to OTR activities. People often respond better if they feel they are part of the process.
- When there is a mixed meet, event, or trip ensure there is at least one male and one female helper.

The following must never be sanctioned:

- Taking young people and vulnerable adults alone to your home
- Sharing a room with a young person/people and/or vulnerable adults.
- Allowing young people and vulnerable adults to engage in the use of inappropriate language.
- Making sexually suggestive comments to a young person or vulnerable adult, even in fun.
- Doing things of a personal nature for a young person they can do themselves.
- Allowing allegations made by a child or vulnerable adult to go unchallenged, not acted upon or not recorded.
- Allowing young people and vulnerable adults to consume alcohol or take illegal recreational drugs.
- Allowing any physically rough or sexually provocative, contact or games.

## **Positions of trust**

**All adults who work with young people and vulnerable adults are in a position of trust which has been invested in them by the parents and the young person/ vulnerable adult. This relationship can be described as one in which the responsible adult is in a position of power and influence by virtue of their role. In climbing most adults recognise that there are certain boundaries in the coach/climber relationship which must not be crossed. The relationship is no different to school teacher and pupil.**

## **Recruitment of Staff and Volunteers**

OTR highly values all the work its staff and volunteers do with young people and vulnerable adults. As part of the recruitment process it is important that all those concerned with this work are confident that recruitment procedures are as comprehensive as possible. The vetting of individuals to varying degrees is a necessary part of the recruitment process. This procedure in no way reflects any element of distrust about a possible volunteer; it is merely a procedure that all individuals must go through.

To ensure individuals go through the correct vetting procedures the following guidelines are to be used:

### **Unsupervised access:**

Those people who have regular and/or low ratio access to young people and vulnerable adults:

- All OTR staff involved in climbing activities
- All youth team coaches and regular support team
- All voluntary individuals with a direct involvement with residential trips
- All voluntary individuals with a direct role on outdoor meets.

Due to the amount of responsibility that is involved with unsupervised access the Managing Director or Youth Director will decide upon the level of vetting for all individuals not included in the above list.

Those who are considered to have *unsupervised* access must complete the following procedure:

- Go through a CRB check.
- Fill in a Volunteer Registration form (see Appendix).
- Be approved by OTR Managing Director or OTR Director responsible for Youth to work on OTR supported activities.

### **Supervised access:**

All people involved with OTR activities on an occasional basis, and where it is anticipated the access will be in an open supervised environment, e.g. “one off” competition, helpers must:

- Complete an OTR volunteer registration form.
- Be approved by OTR representative for the activity.

However, if working on a regular basis with young people and vulnerable adults they must go through the CRB check process.

## **Guidelines for the Use of Photography**

It is not the intention of this document to prevent the use of video or photography equipment. Video used in an appropriate way is a valuable coaching aid and family photographs of young people are part and parcel of many family lives. Climbing photography has done much to promote the sport amongst young people and this is an important part of OTR's work. However there is evidence that some people have used sporting events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young and disabled sports people in vulnerable positions. It is advisable that all individuals be vigilant with any concerns to be reported to OTR representative or responsible person at an event.

OTR event co-ordinator or organiser will brief media on the range of acceptable activities when filming to cause the least disruption to any child or vulnerable adult competing or climbing.

### **Photographers briefing**

- 1) If you are commissioning professional photographers or inviting the press to an activity or event it is important to ensure they are clear about your expectations of them in relation to safeguarding.
- 2) Ensure all individuals involved are aware of what is appropriate in terms of content and behaviour.
- 3) OTR event co-ordinator or organiser must ensure they are aware of all individuals taking photographs. They may decide, in the interests of safety, to insist all official photographers wear identification.
- 4) As part of the event information sheet all participants and parents should be informed if there is to be a photographer present. Parents/ carers should also be given the opportunity to object if they do not wish images of their child/ vulnerable adult to be used.
- 5) Inform athletes and parents/ guardians that a photographer will be in attendance at an event and ensure they consent to both the taking and publication of films or photographs.
- 6) Event co-ordinators and organisers should not allow unsupervised access to young climbers or one to one photo sessions at events.
- 7) If a photo shoot is arranged outside a OTR event but is in any way connected to OTR activities, or photographs are to be used within OTR literature, then the child's parents must be informed by OTR.
- 8) Avoid the use of the first name and surname of individuals in a photograph. This reduces the risk of inappropriate, unsolicited attention from people outside the sport.  
An easy rule to remember is:
- 9) If the climber is named, avoid using their photograph.
- 10) If the photograph is used, avoid naming the climber/participant. In situations where it is necessary for climbers to be named ensure there is permission from both the climber and parents.
- 11) Ask for consent from the parent/guardian to use an image of a young person or vulnerable adult. This ensures that parents/guardians are aware of the way the image of their child or vulnerable adult is used to represent the sport.
- 12) Ask for climber's permission to use his or her image. This ensures that they are aware of the way the image of themselves is to be used to representing the sport.
- 13) Create a recognised procedure for reporting the use of inappropriate images to reduce the risks to athletes.



14) Current OTR guidance allows children and vulnerable adults to be named in some publications and events. Individual briefings will be given. It is important that contact details for the young person with a name or photograph are NOT given.

**Videoing as a coaching aid:** there is no intention to prevent club coaches and teachers using video equipment as a legitimate coaching aid. However, young climbers 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.

At OTR events that are open to the general public where young people and vulnerable adults are climbing the following guidelines should be used:

“No unauthorised photography” signs should be erected informing people that anyone wishing to take photography should register their intentions with OTR representative.

## **Guidelines for Staff and Volunteers regarding Social Networking Sites**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The use of Social Networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter and others can be very advantageous OnThisROC staff and volunteers both professionally and personally. In this day and age the pace of internet and social media is constant – and instant! It can offer opportunities to communicate with/stay in touch with people near and far.
- 1.2 However it can also be fraught with potential risks and difficulties. The following guidelines are designed for OnThisROC staff and volunteers who are members of social networking sites to ensure they follow best practice.
- 1.3 These guidelines should be read in conjunction with the other guidance on child protection and the protection of vulnerable adults which is part of OTR’s Safeguarding Policy.

### **2. Guidelines**

- 2.1 Consider having a ‘profile’ separate from your personal private profile which can be a professional account. This will allow employees and volunteers to keep their private and professional lives completely separate.
- 2.2 If you allow young people, or others to whom you represent to have access to a personal social networking account/ profile, then you must ensure that they do not have access to private information about you which may compromise either you and/or the OnThisROC. This includes personal contact information and private arrangements between friends among other things.
- 2.3 Many sites offer a ‘restricted profile’ option which allows certain ‘friends’ to only see a limited amount of information. Where available, this should be used and should be checked thoroughly to ensure that you are aware of exactly which information can be viewed.
- 2.4 It is strongly recommended that you do not post any information about yourself on the internet which may be embarrassing, inappropriate, compromising or offensive, no matter who can view it. This includes your use of language, your posting of (or tagging of) photographs and your recounting of stories and experiences.
- 2.5 When young people contact you personally away from work via Social networking sites or any other media, then it is strongly recommended that you keep a copy of correspondence sent and received.
- 2.6 When young people contact you personally away from work via Social networking sites or any other media, then it is strongly recommended that you do take every reasonable step to ensure that the young person does not form an inappropriate attachment to you. Such an attachment may be misconstrued by third parties, and may give the young person false expectations and impressions. If you suspect that there is a danger of this, you are advised to limit the contact as much as possible outside of work, and to inform your supervisor immediately.
- 2.7 It is strongly recommended that where possible you do not allow young people to have any of your personal phone numbers, your home address, or any other information about you which may lead to significant contacts away from work which may later be hard to recount. i.e. conversations which cannot be recorded and looked over, if need be. If young people need to have a contact number/address or visit your home, make sure this is for planned group activities where others are also present and ensure adequate young people/adult ratio; and always in line with your OnThisROC’s Safeguarding Policy.
- 2.8 If you are using Facebook or any other site to advertise events or to make arrangements, then it is vital that you take reasonable steps to ensure that no information which may

compromise the safety of young people is made public. You should also remember that there is a **legal age limit of 13yrs old** for access to sites such as Facebook.

- 2.9 If, when viewing an internet site, you become aware of a situation in which a young person is potentially in danger, then it is vital that you report it straight away. Depending on the situation, you may report it to either, your supervisor, your safeguarding officer, the police, the CEOP or another relevant authority.
- 2.10 Where you have any significant or regular contact with a young person via a social networking site, you should ensure, where appropriate and possible, that your supervisor and the young person's parents are aware that the contact is taking place.

### **3. Legal considerations**

3.1 It is worth being aware of some of the laws that exist to offer protection:

#### **3.1.1 The Human Rights Act 1998**

This Act gives a 'right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence'. People should therefore have a reasonable expectation of privacy and all courts must now interpret existing legislation in relation to the Human Rights Act. No one should include any inappropriate personal information about another person through any social networking/media or Email and in addition this must not be divulged to any external third party.

#### **3.1.2 The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000**

This Act covers the extent to which organisations can monitor or record communications at the point at which they enter or are being sent within the employer's telecommunications system, and applies to public and private communication networks. It gives the sender or recipient of a communication the right of action for damages against the employer for the unlawful interception of communications. There are two areas where monitoring is not unlawful. These are:

- (i) where the employer reasonably believes that the sender and intended recipient have consented to the interception, and
- (ii) without consent, the employer may monitor in certain circumstances, for example, to prevent crime, protect their business or to comply with financial regulations.

Organisations can reserve the right to monitor all internal and external communications in appropriate ways that protect its reputation and integrity

#### **3.1.3 The Data Protection Act 1988**

This is an Act that many are already very familiar with.

The government's Information Commissioner is responsible for enforcement of the Data Protection Act and has published a code of practice to help employers comply with the provisions of the Act. Organisations should be mindful of information which relates to them, their staff, and those for whom it holds information - in the processing of individual data (and the basis for monitoring and retention of email communications and other paperwork including personnel records).





### 2.5.1 The Public Interest Disclosure Act (1999)

This Act encourages people to `blow the whistle` about malpractice in the workplace and is designed to ensure that organisations respond by acting on the message rather than against the messenger. The Act applies to employees and volunteers blowing the whistle about crime, civil offences (including negligence etc), miscarriage of justice, danger to health and safety or the environment and the cover-up of any of these. It applies whether or not the information is confidential and extends to malpractice occurring in the UK and any other country. In addition to employees, it covers trainees, agency staff, contractors, and home workers. A disclosure in good faith to a manager should ensure that the whistleblower will be protected if they have reasonable suspicion that the malpractice has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur.



## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Useful Websites**

[www.onthisroc.co.uk](http://www.onthisroc.co.uk)

[www.theBMC.co.uk](http://www.theBMC.co.uk)

[www.disclosure.gov.uk](http://www.disclosure.gov.uk)

[www.sportscoachuk.org](http://www.sportscoachuk.org)

### **Useful Contacts**

BMC Officer responsible for Youth  
0870 0104878

BMC Chief Executive.  
Dave Turnbull  
0870 0104878

The NSPCC help line  
Tel 0808 800 5000  
Asian Helpline: 0800 096 7719  
Welsh Helpline: 0800 100 2524  
[www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

Safeguarding in Sport Unit  
0116 234 7278  
[www.thecpsu.org.uk](http://www.thecpsu.org.uk)

## **APPENDIX 2**

OTR does not have a formal coaching qualification structure but does support the leader qualification structure operated by MLTE. OTR recognises the need for proof of technical competence with respect to coaching. OTR uses personal competence and experience as a measure of coaching competence.

### **Good Coaching Practice – Key Principles**

#### **Rights**

Coaches must respect and champion the rights of every individual to participate in sport.

#### **Relationships**

Coaches must develop a relationship with athletes (and others) based on openness, honesty, mutual trust and respect.

#### **Responsibilities – personal standards**

Coaches must demonstrate proper personal behaviour and conduct at all times.

#### **Responsibilities – professional standards**

To maximise benefits and minimise the risks to athletes, coaches must attain a high level of competence through qualifications and a commitment to ongoing training that ensures safe and correct practice.

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **OTR Procedures for Dealing with Poor Practice**

1. Once an incident has been reported to either OTR Director responsible for Youth or OTR Managing Director he or she will, in turn, pass it onto the Safeguarding Referral Group to decide if the incident relates to abuse or bad practice. If the incident is identified as abuse then it will immediately be handed onto the statutory bodies;
2. If it is decided the incident relates to bad practice then after consultation with the Board of Directors then a decision will be made whether or not to suspend, temporarily the person accused;
3. A disciplinary hearing will be called. The disciplinary committee will consist of:
  - An independent person.
  - A senior officer of OTR.
  - Technical experts.
4. The accused will be advised of the receipt of a report;
5. The accused will be invited to a hearing which will be held at a convenient time for them;
6. The accused must be given sufficient advanced warning of a hearing;
7. The accused must be given opportunity to offer their explanation of the incident;
8. Once the panel has made its decision it must relate this to the accused in writing as soon as possible.
9. A copy of the finding should be held by OTR.
10. The power of the disciplinary committee:
  - Temporary suspension.
  - Person may only work with young people and vulnerable adults when supervised.
  - Person must undergo some form of training.

## OTR SAFEGUARDING INCIDENT FORM

For detailed questions, use a separate sheet if necessary

EVENT DETAILS	
Name of event	
Date of event	
Co-ordinator	

YOUR DETAILS	
Name	
Your Position	
Contact tel.	

CHILD/ VULNERABLE ADULT DETAILS	
Name	
Address (inc. postcode)	
Tel	
D.O.B.	

PARENTAL/GUARDIAN DETAILS	
Name(s)	
Address (inc. postcode)	
Tel (if different to above)	

WITNESS DETAILS	
Name (1)	
Address (inc postcode)	
Tel	
Name (2)	
Address (inc postcode)	
Tel	

INCIDENT DETAILS	DATE AND TIME OF INCIDENT:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your observations (i.e. what is the nature of the allegation (including dates, times and any special factors or other relevant information (make clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay).</li> <li>Describe any visible bruising or other injuries, behavioural signs or indirect signs. Use additional sheets.</li> <li>The account of the young person/vulnerable adult, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred (remember, do not lead the child or vulnerable adult– record actual details.) use additional sheets.</li> <li>Actions taken so far (including whether anyone else has been contacted and if so who?)</li> </ul>		
Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser?	YES	NO
If YES give name:		

<b>OTHER PROFESSIONALS CONTACTED</b>			
Have any external agencies been contacted (i.e. police, Social Services, NSPCC). If yes, please provide details below.			
<b>Police</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	
If yes, which?			
Name & contact number			
Details and advice received			
<b>Social Services</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	
If yes, which?			
Name & contact number			
Details and advice received			
<b>Other (e.g. NSPCC)</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	
If yes, which?			
Name & contact number			
Details and advice received			



**ANY FURTHER INFORMATION:**

Large empty rectangular box for providing further information.

Signed:.....

Print name:.....

Date:../../.....

**REMEMBER to maintain confidentiality on a *need to know* basis – only if it will protect the child/vulnerable adult. Do not discuss this incident with anyone other than those who need to know.  
A copy of this form should be sent to OTR's Managing Director and relevant OTR officer.**





## VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION AND SELF DECLARATION FORM

This form is in two parts. Everyone fills in sections 1 to 10 inclusive.

**To work unsupervised with young people and vulnerable adults you must also fill in sections 11 and 12 for a CRB check.**

You have a right of access to information held on you and other rights under the Data Protection Act

1.DETAILS					
First Name					
Surname					
Current Address		Postcode:			
Time at current address (years)					
If you have lived less than 3 years at your current address please include your previous address here.		Postcode:			
Telephone (day)		Telephone (eve)			
Mobile		Email			
Date of Birth	/	/	Gender appropriate) (circle	Male	Female
Current occupation and dates of employment:					

**2. WHAT SORT OF EVENT DO YOU FEEL ABLE TO ASSIST OTR WITH**

*E.g. climbing clubs, school work, charity events, fundraisers, admin.*

**3. EXPERIENCE and EXPERTISE**

*Please give details of any climbing or outdoor education experience you may have or any experience which you think would be of benefit to your volunteering with OTR.*

**4. QUALIFICATIONS (IF ANY) OR PREVIOUS VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE**

*a. supervising/instructing/coaching young people and vulnerable adults in mountaineering/rock climbing activities, indoors and outdoors: age groups, residential work, any qualifications you may have to assist on events in the UK and abroad, teaching or youth work qualifications, up to date coaching qualifications, First Aid Certificate, CWA, CWLA, SPA, WGL, ML, MIA, MIC, UIAGM Guide. (use separate sheet if necessary)*

*b. Briefly outline your experience in supervising young people and vulnerable adults in non-mountaineering activities, e.g. teaching or youthwork:*

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<b>5. TRAINING</b> <i>Please detail any training you may require</i>
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<b>6. SECURITY</b>
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<b>Are there any reasons such as criminal convictions, cautions or bound over orders that might prevent you working with young people and vulnerable adults or limit what you can do? (please circle as appropriate)</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
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<b>If YES, please supply details</b>

<b>Are you a person known to any social services department as being an actual or potential risk to children and vulnerable</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
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<b>adults? (please circle as appropriate.</b>		
<b>If YES, please supply details</b>		
<b>Has any Social Services Department or Police Service ever conducted an enquiry or investigation into any allegations or concerns that you may pose an actual or potential risk to children and vulnerable adults or vulnerable adults? (please circle as appropriate)</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>If YES, please supply details</b>		
<b>Have you had a disciplinary sanction (from a sport, or other organisation's governing body) relating to the abuse of a child or vulnerable adult or have you ever been subject to any disciplinary procedure or been asked to leave employment or voluntary activity due to inappropriate behaviour towards children or vulnerable adults? (please circle as appropriate)</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>If YES, please supply details</b>		

<b>7. HEALTH</b>						
<i>Please indicate any health problems for which you are receiving treatment:</i>						
<b>8. AVAILABILITY</b>						
<i>Please indicate your availability to be a volunteer:</i>						
Daytime	Evening	Full Weekends	Weekly	Monthly	Occasional	Other
<b>I am happy, if necessary for the OTR Manager or Event Organiser to contact me prior to the event:</b>					<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>

**9. DETAILS OF NEXT OF KIN WHO CAN BE CONTACTED IN CASE OF EMERGENCY**

<b>Name</b>			
<b>Address</b>			
	<b>Postcode:</b>		
<b>Telephone (day)</b>		<b>Telephone (evening)</b>	

**OTR Participation Statement:**

OTR recognises that climbing, hill walking and mountaineering are activities with a danger of personal injury or death. Participants in these activities should be aware of and accept these risks and be responsible for their own actions and involvement.

**10. SIGNATURE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RISK**

I confirm that the above information is correct and that I do not have any criminal convictions or court orders that would prevent me from working with young people and vulnerable adults. I have read OTR **Participation Statement** and I am aware that climbing, hill walking and mountaineering are activities with a danger of personal injury or death. I understand it is an offence to apply for, offer to do, accept or do any work with children and vulnerable adults (paid or unpaid) if disqualified from working with children and vulnerable adults.

<b>Signed:</b>	<b>Date:</b>

**Completing the remainder of this form is the first step in applying for a Criminal Records Bureau enhanced disclosure check (a CRB check) to work unsupervised with young people and vulnerable adults. Only continue if you wish to do this. If you already hold a current Disclosure please contact OTR.**

<b>11. I HAVE READ AND AGREE WITH</b>	
(Please tick the appropriate boxes below): If you have not received one or more of the documents listed below copies are available on OTR website.	
OTR Safeguarding Policy	
OTR Good Practice for Coaches in Climbing	
OTR Equal Opportunities Policy	

<b>12. REFERENCES</b>	
Appropriate referees are those who have known you for over 3 years, e.g. someone who has worked with you coaching or looking after young people and vulnerable adults and a character reference from a past employer. We will follow up references.	
<b>REFEREE 1</b>	
<b>First Name</b>	
<b>Surname</b>	
<b>Address (current)</b>	
	<b>Postcode:</b>
<b>Telephone (day/eve)</b>	
<b>Email</b>	
<b>Relationship with the above:</b>	

<b>REFEREE 2</b>	
<b>First Name</b>	
<b>Surname</b>	
<b>Address (current)</b>	
	<b>Postcode:</b>
<b>Telephone (day/eve)</b>	
<b>Email</b>	
<b>Relationship with the above:</b>	

<b>Please state which referee you will be giving to the CRB if asked</b>	
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I am contacting OTR and will follow the steps outlined on the next page to apply for an enhanced disclosure with the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB).

<b>Signed:</b>	<b>Date:</b>





To apply for a Criminal Records Bureau Enhanced Disclosure please carry out the following steps:

1. Return your completed OTR Volunteer Registration Form and Self Declaration Form to OTR.
2. Telephone OTR on 07850 344144 to request a CRB pack. OTR is not a registered body for CRB checks. OTR uses an umbrella body called '1<sup>st</sup> Ace Ltd'.
3. The following costs apply for enhanced CRB checks:
  - OTR volunteers, including OTR Area Youth Co-ordinators, are entitled to a free CRB check.
  - OTR Affiliated Club volunteers are required to pay a £10 administration fee.
  - Associate Member volunteers are required to pay a £10 administration fee.
  - Those who need a CRB check for their employment, including OTR Associated members who wish to use this service, are required to pay £46.
4. When you have completed your CRB application form and signed where necessary, please return to 1<sup>st</sup> Ace Ltd with the necessary payment and your required **original identity documents**.
5. Your original documents will be photocopied and returned to you as soon as possible. 1<sup>st</sup> Ace Ltd retains photocopies of your documents for six months.
6. 1<sup>st</sup> Ace Ltd forwards your completed Disclosure application form to the CRB.
7. You should receive your Enhanced Disclosure in the post within four weeks. A copy of your Enhanced Disclosure will also be sent to 1<sup>st</sup> Ace Ltd, for reference and OTR notified.

### Useful Websites

[www.onthisroc.co.uk](http://www.onthisroc.co.uk)

[www.disclosure.gov.uk](http://www.disclosure.gov.uk)

[www.crb.org.uk](http://www.crb.org.uk)

[www.sportscoachuk.org](http://www.sportscoachuk.org)