

# Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy & Procedures

V5.5 Revised: May 2025



## Responsibility

Overall and final responsibility for child and vulnerable adult protection and safeguarding is that of:

### Andrew Crossley

Cycle North, HEART, Bennett Rd., Headingley, Leeds LS6 3HN 07504282133

Andrew is also the staff member with responsibility to ensure allegations are passed to the LADO (local authority designated officer)

Day-to-day responsibility for ensuring this policy is put into practice is delegated to all staff.

## Statement

We all have a legal and moral responsibility to protect the children, young people and vulnerable adults, with whom we come into contact, from abuse. All individuals involved in cycle training for Cycle North Ltd, agree to abide by this policy.

This policy will also apply to the safeguarding vulnerable adults and concerns should be addressed through this policy. The broad definition of a 'vulnerable adult' is a person who is 18 years or over who is in need of community care services by reason of mental health or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

## General principles

- Everyone who participates in cycling is entitled to do so in a safe and enjoyable environment.
- All Cycle North instructors and other staff must follow the policies defined in this document.
- Cycle North is committed to helping everyone in cycling accept their responsibility to safeguard children from harm and abuse and support them to do so.

This document sets out the procedures you need to follow to protect children and vulnerable adults and what you need to do if you have any concerns.

## **Scope**

These policies apply to all instructors, assistants, volunteers, and anyone involved in cycling, whether or not they are Cycle North employees. All these people have a duty of care to safeguard the welfare of children and prevent their abuse.

## **Why these policies are needed**

Abuse can occur in many situations including the home, school and the cycling club. We know that some individuals will actively seek access to children and vulnerable adults through sport in order to harm them.

## **Policy statement**

Cycle North is committed to:

- making the welfare of children and vulnerable adults paramount. This means that the need to ensure that they are protected is a primary consideration and may override the rights and needs of those adults working with them
- enabling everyone whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity to participate in cycling in a fun and safe environment
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from harm, discrimination and degrading treatment and to respect their rights, wishes and feelings
- taking seriously all suspicions and allegations of poor practice or abuse and responding swiftly and appropriately to them in accordance with current procedures
- ensuring that all Cycle North employees who work with children and vulnerable adults are appropriate for that role and responsibilities and provided with relevant training
- recognising that children and families from minority group backgrounds may face barriers to accessing help and reporting concerns in respect of safeguarding issues

## **Good practice, poor practice and abuse**

It can be difficult to distinguish poor practice from abuse, whether intentional or accidental. It is not the responsibility of any individual involved in cycling to make judgements regarding whether or not abuse is taking place, however, all Cycle North personnel have the responsibility to recognise and identify poor practice and potential abuse, and act on this if they have concerns.

## **Good practice**

The role of instructor enables that individual to potentially develop a close relationship with children and vulnerable adults. All instructors have a responsibility to maintain high standards of professional practice.

Cycle North requires that instructors:

- are qualified to N.S.I. National Standards

- have completed Safeguarding and Protecting Children and vulnerable adults training
- are suitably educated in safeguarding and First Aid as a minimum standard.

They should:

- conduct a risk assessment before undertaking any cycling related activities
- aim to make the experience of cycling fun and enjoyable
- promote fairness and playing by the rules
- not tolerate the use of prohibited or illegal substances
- treat all children fairly and preserve their dignity; this includes giving more and less talented members of a group similar attention, time and respect commensurate with their needs
- ensure that the training intensity is appropriate to the physical, social and emotional stage of the development of the rider
- build relationships based on mutual trust and respect
- always be publicly open when working with children
- avoid situations where an instructor a young person are completely unobserved
- avoid communicating electronically with young trainees/participants including emails, text messages and social media.
- maintain an appropriate and open environment, with no secrets
- avoid unnecessary physical contact with young people, always explain and ask if there is any need to touch.
- maintain a safe and appropriate relationship with cyclists. It is inappropriate for coaches and others in positions of trust to have an intimate relationship with a child under 18 years. This could be a criminal offence, an 'abuse of trust' as defined by the *Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2000*
- be an excellent role model by maintaining appropriate standards of behaviour
- gain written parental consent, to act in loco parentis for the administration of emergency first aid or other medical treatment if the need arises
- be aware of any medical conditions, existing injuries, disabilities and medicines being taken. Keep a written record of any injury or accident that occurs, together with details of any treatment given
- ensure that someone with appropriate training in and current knowledge of emergency first aid is available

### Personal Care

It may sometimes be necessary for staff or volunteers to do things of a personal nature for young people, particularly if they are very young or are disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of the young person and the parents and/or school staff. Avoid taking on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained.

If any of the following incidents should occur, you should report them to school staff or parents:

- if you accidentally hurt a trainee;
- if he/she seems distressed in any manner;
- if a player misunderstands or misinterprets something you have said or done.

## Late collection

When working with groups of children outside of a School based situation late collection of children can present instructors with a potentially difficult situation. Cycle North will make clear that it is not their responsibility to transport children home on behalf of parents who have been delayed.

Cycle North will:

- promote a staff contact number for parents/carers to phone if there is any likelihood of late collection. Although it is unlikely that instructors will be able to answer their phone during training it should be possible to leave a message.
- ask all parents/carers to provide an alternative contact name and number to be used if they can't be reached on their usual numbers.

In cases of late collection, staff and volunteers **should**:

- attempt to contact the child's parent/carer on their contact number;
- use the alternative contact name/number if possible;
- wait with the child at the training / activity location, with other staff or parents present if possible;
- remind parents/carers of the policy relating to late collection.

In cases of late collection, staff and volunteers **should not**:

- take the child home or to any other location without speaking to their parents;
- send the child home with another person without permission from a parent or carer;
- ask the child to wait in a vehicle or building with you alone.

## Photography

Cycle North is committed to ensuring young people are protected from the inappropriate use of their images. No images should be taken during training sessions or at events without the necessary consent being obtained first including for how the images will be used, especially if this is on websites and in other publications. Instructors should never take photos or video of trainees except following the specific direction of Cycle North management who will obtain the appropriate consent from the relevant parties. Instructors should discourage the taking of photos and video by participants, e.g. on smartphones, and not accept images taken by participants in this way.

## Poor practice

The following are regarded as poor practice and should be avoided:

- contacting riders outside of the training session / activity / event
- spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others
- engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games
- allowing or engaging in inappropriate touching of any form
- using inappropriate language to a child or allowing children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- making sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in jest

- reducing a child to tears as a form of control
- letting allegations made by a child go uninvestigated, unrecorded, or not acted upon
- doing things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves
- taking children alone in a car on journeys, however short (see note below)
- inviting or taking children to your vehicle, home, or other building where they will be alone with you (see note below)

**Note:** In exceptional circumstances it may be impractical to avoid some of these particular examples of poor practice. In which case, to protect the children and yourself, you must seek host school agreement, parental consent and also inform your line manager at Cycle North.

If whilst in your care a child is accidentally hurt, the child seems distressed in any way, appears to be sexually aroused by your actions, or misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done, report any such incidents as soon as possible to the host school, the child's parents, your line manager as appropriate.

## **Abuse**

Abuse is a broad term in the context of safeguarding children. There are many degrees of abuse and it can take many forms. This can range from low-level name calling or ridiculing of a rider, which may be considered "poor practice" to serious neglect or physical attacks which would likely lead to a child protection investigation being conducted.

Abuse in all its forms can affect a child at any age. The effects can be so damaging that without appropriate intervention, they may continue to have a very negative impact upon an individual into adulthood.

An individual who has been abused may:

- find it difficult, or impossible to maintain a stable, trusting relationship
- become involved with drugs or prostitution
- attempt suicide or self-harm
- go on to abuse another child.
- show angry or volatile behaviour without reason

Those who belong to a group that may be considered additionally vulnerable such as those with disabilities may be at increased risk of abuse through various factors such as:

- stereotyping
- prejudice
- discrimination, including ethnic or racial
- isolation
- powerlessness to protect themselves
- inability to communicate that abuse has occurred.

## **Indicators of abuse**

Even for those experienced in working with child abuse, it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. It is not the responsibility of

those working in cycling to decide that child abuse is occurring, but it is their responsibility to act on any concerns.

Indications that a child is being abused may include one or more of the following:

- unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries or an injury for which an explanation seems inconsistent
- the child describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her
- someone else, a child or adult, expresses concern about the welfare of a child
- unexplained changes in a child's behaviour, e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn, displaying sudden outbursts of temper or behaviour changing over time
- inappropriate sexual awareness
- engaging in sexually explicit behaviour
- distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected
- difficulty in making friends
- being prevented from socialising with other children
- displaying variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite
- losing weight for no apparent reason
- becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt.

Abuse may be classified under the following headings:

### **Neglect**

In a cycling context this could include:

- an instructor not keeping children safe by exposing them to undue cold, heat or the unnecessary risk of injury e.g. allowing cyclists under their supervision to train inappropriately clothed for the prevailing conditions
- a parent consistently leaving a child without adequate provisions e.g. food, water, clothing, sun protection.

### **Physical Abuse**

In a cycling situation this could include:

- hitting a child in your care
- shaking a rider who has misbehaved during a session
- using violent, physical or humiliating punishments;

### **Sexual Abuse**

In a cycling situation indicators could include:

- allowing or engaging in any form of inappropriate touching
- making sexually suggestive comments even in fun
- an inappropriately close relationship developing between a rider and a coach

- do things of a personal nature for young people that they can do for themselves

## **Emotional Abuse**

In a cycling situation this could include:

- a parent or instructor subjecting a rider to constant criticism, name-calling, sarcasm, bullying or racism
- a parent or instructor putting a rider under unrealistic pressure in order to perform to high expectations.
- reduce a person to tears as a form of control

## **Responding to suspicions and allegations of abuse**

### **Introduction**

Although most cases of child abuse take place within the family setting, abuse can and does occur in cycling.

- It is essential that all allegations are taken seriously and appropriate action is taken.
- It is not your responsibility to decide if child abuse is taking place.
- It is your responsibility to report your concerns to the Cycle North management team- no matter how trivial the concern may appear.
- Not acting is not an option.

### **Receiving evidence of possible abuse**

You may have concerns about abuse/poor practice because:

- you see it happening
- you recognise signs such as those listed in Section 2.4.1
- someone reports it to you
- a child approaches you directly.

If a child says or indicates that they are being abused, or you have concerns about their welfare you should:

- react calmly so as not to frighten them
- tell them they are not to blame and that it was right to speak up
- take what they say seriously
- recognise that there may be inherent difficulties in interpreting what is said by someone who has a speech disability and/or differences in language
- keep questions to the absolute minimum necessary so that there is a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said
- reassure them, but do not promise to keep the matter secret – explain that to resolve the problem it will be necessary to inform other people as appropriate

- the safety of the child is paramount - if the child needs urgent medical attention call an ambulance, inform the doctors of the concern and ensure they are made aware that this is a child protection issue
- record all information
- report in accordance with Cycle North's procedures.

## **Recording information: confidentiality and information sharing**

All concerns that you may receive should be recorded.

You are recording this information for:

- yourself, so you have a record of what happened
- the Cycle North Management Team so that they can advise you
- the Police/Children's Social Care Services if appropriate.

It is not appropriate to share sensitive and confidential information with other people, e.g:

- your colleagues who are unconnected to the incident
- other acquaintances outside Cycle North

Any information relating to child protection should be held under secure conditions and made available on a need-to-know basis only.

When recording information you should:

- confine yourself to the facts – what you have observed/seen, heard or had reported to you
- distinguish between what is your own personal knowledge and what you have been told by other people
- not include your own opinions on the matter. Be clear where you are giving either your own or others' interpretation of events and the reasons for this (e.g. context, individual's response to challenge).

## **Reporting the concern**

The discovery that someone you know may be abusing a child will raise strong feelings and concerns. Although it can be difficult to report such matters, you must remember that:

- the welfare of the child is paramount
- being vigilant helps to protect children
- everyone has a duty of care to report any concerns they have immediately
- a good reporting structure ensures that concerns are dealt with fairly.

Cycle North's Whistle Blowing Policy assures all members, staff, and volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone who, in good faith, reports a concern that a colleague is or may be abusing a child.

## **Involving parents or carers**



Cycle North is committed to working in partnership with parents. In most situations, it is important that parents are allowed to clarify any initial concerns e.g. if a child seems withdrawn, they may have experienced a recent bereavement.

Where a parent or carer may be responsible for the abuse or may not be able to respond to the situation appropriately they should not be involved, as it may place the child at greater risk.

## **Involving Cycle North**

Cycle North must be informed of all allegations of abuse and persistent poor practice as soon as possible in order to decide the following:

- what further action should be taken by Cycle North
- whether further action, advice or investigation is needed by/from the Police, Children's Social Care Services or the NSPCC.

Passing on this information is important because the matter may be just one of a series of other instances which together cause concern.

## **Involving Statutory Agencies**

In any case of physical or sexual abuse or where the child's safety is at risk, you should contact one of the following statutory agencies immediately:

- Your local Police Child Protection Team or in an emergency dial **999**.

The police should be involved if the apparent abuse is of a criminal nature or if the incident involves a person outside the child's family. A record should be made of the crime reference number.

- Children and Young People's Social Care **0113 2224403**

This body has a statutory duty for the welfare of children, especially where the alleged person is a member of the child's family. When a referral is made, their employees have a legal responsibility to investigate. This may involve talking to the child and family and gathering information from other people who know the child. In an emergency the Samaritans (**08457 909 090**) will hold the duty officer's contact number.

- NSPCC (freephone 24 hour helpline **0808 800 5000**).

All telephone referrals to the above bodies should be confirmed in writing by you within 24 hours to that agency. You should record the following:

- name and job title of the member of staff to whom the concerns were passed
- the time and date of the call
- a summary of the information shared and the response received.

## **Allegations of previous abuse**

Allegations of abuse are occasionally made some time after the event, for example by an adult abused as a child by someone who is still working with children. Where such an allegation is made, you should follow the procedures given above and have the matter reported to Cycle North, the police and/or Local Authority Children's Social Care Services. This is because other children, either within the sport or outside it, may be at risk from this person. Normally, anyone who has a previous criminal conviction for offences related to child abuse is automatically excluded from working with children.

## **Barring individuals from working with vulnerable groups**

Individuals working in cycling may be or become barred from working with vulnerable groups. This means they can no longer engage with these groups. This will occur in a number of ways:

- Cycle North may refer an individual to the Independent Safeguarding Authority as recommended by Social Care Services following a safeguarding investigation
- The individual may be barred due to reasons outside of cycling

## **Actions and sanctions**

Cycle North may take action to restrict a member's involvement in cycling during an ongoing investigation. This is a neutral act and does not pre-empt any decision. At a later point the individual may be subject to action under the Cycle North Disciplinary Rules.

## **Summary**

As outlined elsewhere in this document everyone involved in delivering cycling activities has a duty to act if they have a concern about a child. There are a variety of actions that can be taken. As a minimum the person concerned should contact Cycle North management for help and guidance on how to progress their concerns.

Additional information on Child and Vulnerable adult safeguarding in Leeds can be found in the Leeds Safeguarding Children Board's and the Leeds Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board's safeguarding policies and procedures.

These can be found at [www.leedslscb.org.uk](http://www.leedslscb.org.uk) and [www.leedssafeguardingadults.org.uk](http://www.leedssafeguardingadults.org.uk).

## **Bikeability Scheme - Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**

The following official policy applies to the Bikeability Training in schools provided by Cycle North on behalf of Leeds City Council. It forms a supplement to, not a replacement of, the detailed guidance given above

## **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**

## **Scheme name – Cycle Leeds**

## **Document version number 01 (Amended to 'Cycle Leeds')**

**Date - 6<sup>th</sup> January 2014**

This policy covers children (i.e. persons under 18 years of ages) and vulnerable adults.

The following information is for the guidance of cycle instructors, who, although working with children, will only be in contact with them for relatively short periods over a brief time scale. It follows the best practice advice issued by British Cycling in their publication 'Policy and Procedures for the Protection of children and vulnerable adults' (2003).

Anyone working as a cycle instructor must undergo a criminal record check undertaken by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) before delivering cycle training. This will be presented to the school during the commissioning of the cycle training course.

Cycle Leeds recognises the responsibilities as listed below when working to deliver cycle training to children:

- Safeguard children from harm and abuse
- Take action when necessary to safeguard children
- Report any concerns about the welfare of children in their care

A key aspect of the child protection policy relating to cycle training is that it is the duty of instructors and other staff involved in the provision of cycle training to raise/report any concerns they have about any child under their supervision. An instructor may suspect that abuse has been inflicted on a child by an unknown third party; a colleague, a parent or teacher; or another child or group of children. If abuse is suspected a record must be kept of what has been said and it must be reported to the relevant authority. Acting on concerns is not the responsibility of the cycle trainer. Determining whether or not abuse has taken place is the domain of child protection professionals (social services and the police). However, the guidelines below will help to identify good practice in child protection when delivering cycle training.

Everyone who participates in cycling activities is entitled to an enjoyable and safe environment care and protection from abuse; the guidelines below are aimed at ensuring this is the case.

### **Instructors' conduct:**

In order to avoid false accusations instructors should adhere to the policies and procedures laid down, follow the training syllabus and ensure that their personal behaviour is beyond reproach and unambiguous.

As such, instructors should;

- Act as an excellent role model (no smoking or drinking alcohol while working with young people)
- Respect all individuals irrespective of age, ability, sex and sexual orientation, development stage, religion, race or colour.
- Ensure that young people can participate without fear of harassment, intimidation, bullying and abuse.
- Treat everyone fairly, giving similar attention to those with more and less ability. • Put the child's welfare before personal achievement
- Maintain a safe and appropriate relationship with their trainees
- Any relationship must be built on trust
- Demonstrate proper personal behaviour and conduct at all times
- Refrain from touching the trainee unnecessarily, always explain and ask if there is any need to touch
- Ensure that all training is carried out in as safe an environment as possible
- Avoid being alone with a child
- Ensure parents or those responsible for the child understand if training is to be carried out on a one to one basis, and encourage them to be there if they wish. Such training should not take place in a secluded area.
- Do not leave a child in a situation that you cannot control or where another can abuse them.
- Hand over care of the child to an appropriate person at the end of a training session, do not leave them alone.
- Always encourage and do not shout. Encouragement will produce better results whilst shouting can be classed as abuse.
- Never reduce a child to tears.
- Never use inappropriate language or sexual references
- Take care that the training session is not too long or strenuous
- Try to ensure children are dressed appropriately for the activity
- Not keep them out if they are obviously suffering by being too wet, cold, hot, tired, thirsty or hungry
- Be watchful of any symptoms of illness or distress
- Under no circumstances hit or strike a child
- Return any child who cannot be controlled to the care of the teacher or parent
- Report any witnessed, or suspected, incident of abuse to the head teacher or person responsible for the course
- Explain, if any child confides that they have been abused, that they will have to report it further
- Report to the head teacher or any person responsible for the course any incident of abuse confided to them by a child
- Report any injury suffered by a child to the school, parent or course organiser
- Never take photographs of children without the express consent of their parent or guardian
- Remember that abuse takes many forms
- Emotional: e.g. showing anger
- Verbal: e.g. using sarcasm, putting down, bullying, applying too much pressure to achieve
- Physical: e.g. inflicting pain or injury
- Neglect: e.g. actions meaning children are in the rain too long, inappropriate kit, leaving child unsupervised
- Sexual: e.g. touching or sexually explicit language

**Following the good practice guidelines listed above will ensure that:**

- All instructors/assistants operate within an agreed ethical framework.
  - Cycling makes a positive contribution to the development of young people.
  - Instructors are protected from false allegations of abuse or poor practice.
- Responding to Disclosure
- If a child discloses an allegation of abuse, it is important that instructors/assistants know how to respond. The following points provide good practice guidance to follow:
    - Do not interrupt the child; listen carefully to what they have to say.
    - You should not promise that what they tell you will remain confidential. Find an early opportunity to explain that the information may have to be shared with others.
    - Ask questions for clarification only and remember that it is not your duty to investigate the issue, only to establish the facts. Ensure that any questions you ask are not leading questions that suggest a particular answer.
    - Give the child reassurance that they have done the right thing in telling you.
    - Be sure to tell the child what you will do next and with whom you will share the information.
    - It might be useful to make written notes immediately after a disclosure.
    - When making the disclosure known, staff must make sure they speak with the school's child protection officer as soon as possible, in private so as not to disclose the disclosure to others. If the designated person is not available then their deputy or the most senior member of staff available should be informed.