

SOA CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Scottish Orienteering Association (SOA) is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children in its care. We recognise the responsibility to promote safe practice and to protect children from harm, abuse and exploitation. For the purposes of this policy and associated procedures a child is recognised as someone under the age of 18 years.

Staff and volunteers will work together to embrace difference and diversity and respect the rights of children and young people.

This document outlines the SOA's commitment to protecting children.

This policy statement is based on the following principles:

- The welfare of children is the primary concern.
- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, socio-economic status, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from all forms of harm and abuse.
- Child protection is everyone's responsibility.
- Children have the right to express views on all matters which affect them, should they wish to do so.
- Organisations shall work in partnership together with children and parents/carers to promote the welfare, health and development of children.

The SOA will:

1. Promote the health and welfare of children by providing opportunities for them to take part in orienteering safely.
2. Respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of children.
3. Promote and implement appropriate procedures to safeguard the well-being of children and protect them from abuse.
4. Comply with current legislation in requiring coaches and coaching assistants who are working with children to be members of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme or to have a disclosure.
5. Recruit, train, support and supervise its staff, members and volunteers to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect children from abuse and to reduce risk to themselves.
6. Require staff, members and volunteers to adopt and abide by this Child Protection Policy, and related procedures.
7. Support and encourage all adult members and volunteers working with children to attend basic Child Protection training.
8. Support and require **all** members to observe the British Orienteering Code of Conduct for Coaches¹, including verbal and non-verbal actions when involved in activities with children.
9. Take seriously all concerns about breach of this Code of Conduct and respond to them in line with the SOA's Complaints Policy and/or Disciplinary Procedure and/or Procedure for Responding to Concerns about Child Abuse
10. Respond to any allegations of misconduct or abuse of children in line with this Policy and these procedures as well as implementing, where appropriate, the relevant disciplinary and appeals procedures.
11. Follow appropriate procedures for recruitment and selection of people to ensure staff/volunteers have been correctly vetted for working with children as appropriate
12. Obtain PVG Scheme Records for PVG Scheme members at regular intervals, usually every 3 years.

13. Reserve the right to require staff, members and volunteers to complete a Self Declaration form for Regulated Work with Children.
14. Make readily available all associated procedures and documents as listed below and promote awareness of these amongst members.
15. Observe guidelines issued by local Child Protection Committees for the protection of children.
16. Regularly review any child protection issues that arise; monitor and evaluate the implementation of this Policy and these procedures.
17. Adopt British Orienteering's "O-Safe" guidelines for aspects where the SOA does not have its own specific guidance or policy.

Review

This Policy and the associated procedures will be regularly reviewed:

- In accordance with changes in legislation and guidance on the protection of children or following any changes within the SOA.
- Following any issues or concerns raised about the protection of children within the SOA.
- In all other circumstances, at least every three years.

Notes

1. Licensed coaches have signed and abide by the British Orienteering Coaches' Code of Conduct; other adults working with children are required to abide by that Code of Conduct with the exception of the third and fourth points under "Professional Responsibilities".

Associated documents

- SOA Child Protection Officer Job Description
- British Orienteering's Code of Conduct for Coaches
- British Orienteering Risk Assessment form
- SOA Procedure for Secure Handling of Disclosure Information
- SOA Policy on the Rehabilitation of Offenders
- SOA Procedure for Recruitment and Selection of Staff/Volunteers
- SOA Procedure for Responding to Concerns about a Child
- SOA Procedure for Responding to Concerns about the Conduct of a Member of Staff/Volunteers
- SOA Data Protection Policy
- SOA Complaints Procedure
- SOA Disciplinary Procedure

Templates

- Club Child Protection Officer Job Description – template
- Job Description for Regulated Work with Children – template
- Self-declaration form for Regulated Work with Children – template