

# Club Welfare Officer

## Responsibilities

Although the responsibility for safeguarding falls on everyone, a critical element in safeguarding is the designation of an individual who is responsible for safeguarding and promoting welfare of young people within the club. All BWL clubs and weightlifting and disability powerlifting events are required to have a welfare officer to be responsible for:

- Responding to child protection and poor practice concerns
- Providing support and advice in the implementation of procedures that safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- Assisting the club to more become child-focused in its activities e.g. involving children in decision making processes.

In order to avoid any potential conflicts of interest, the role must not be taken on by a key member of the coaching team or member of her/his immediate family, however an individual who has a more limited involvement in coaching can take on the role in the event that there is no other acceptable alternative.

The ideal candidate may be a parent or other volunteer with professional experience in child protection and/or safeguarding e.g. police officer, social worker, teacher, nursery nurse etc. As it can often be very difficult to find a suitable candidate for the role, the following information provides some suggestions on how this might be addressed and how the organisation can assist with the role.

*THE CLUB WELFARE OFFICER IS NOT REQUIRED TO MAKE A JUDGEMENT REGARDING AN INCIDENT BUT TO REPORT TO THE GOVERNING BODY LEAD CPO.*

## Raising awareness of the role

It is important that everyone connected with the club or organisation is aware of the need to appoint a welfare officer. Some of the methods that could prove successful include:

- Writing to anyone who may be interested in the position
- Circulating a profile of the role in the club newsletter
- Advertising on the club notice board or website
- 'Head hunting' - making direct approaches to individuals who have the appropriate experience
- Holding an open evening for parents and inviting a welfare officer from another club to talk about the position

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- Arranging a safeguarding and protecting children awareness module as an introduction for potential volunteers.

It is important that prospective candidates are provided with full details of what the role entails and how they will be supported in the position (sample job/task descriptions and person specifications for the role is detailed overleaf). It is also useful to provide potential candidates with relevant information about the club/squad e.g. policy for volunteers, codes of conduct etc.

## What support structures should be in place?

Before finalising the appointment of a welfare officer, the club should ensure that the safe recruitment procedures have been fully applied.

The organisation must ensure that the welfare officer is fully empowered to fulfil the role and has the full support from the relevant committee/management/owners to make any appropriate changes to procedures and practices.

## Recruiting a Welfare Officer Policy and Procedures

### How can the Welfare Officer ensure they are visible and known to club members?

The welfare officer does not need to attend every training session or competition but it is critical that everyone understands the role and the responsibilities it entails. It is important that the welfare officer is fully involved in the club's activities and children and parents are fully aware of how to raise concerns. The following are suggestions may help clubs to ensure that everyone knows the welfare officer and understands her/his role

- Put a poster on the club notice board with the welfare officer's name and contact details. This might include a photograph and a list of times when the welfare officer will be present at the club.
- Make sure that all club paperwork includes the welfare officer's contact details
- Ensure the welfare officer details are included in new member information packs
- Introduce the welfare officer at club events
- Allow the welfare officer to hold an introduction evening
- Allow the welfare officer to engage with young people in the club. This may include developing/revising codes of conduct, electing a young persons' representative to represent young people's views, involve young people in decision making etc.

# Club Welfare Officer

## Role

- To be the first point of contact for staff, volunteers, parent/legal guardians and young people about welfare, poor practice or child abuse are identified
- Implement the club's reporting and recording procedures
- Promote the BWL best practice guidance/ code of ethics and conduct within the club
- Assist the club to fulfil its responsibilities to safeguard young people.
- Assist the club to implement its child welfare plan
- Assist volunteers in keeping their certificates and qualifications up to date
- Sit on the Club's management committee
- Ensure confidentiality is maintained
- Promote anti-discriminatory practice
- Be the first point of contact with British Weight Lifting Lead Child Protection Officer
- Maintain the contact details for the local social services, police and the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) in case of emergency

## Experience and Knowledge

- Own club policy and procedures related to safeguarding and protecting young people
- Own the club role and responsibilities to safeguard the welfare of young people- boundaries of the Welfare Officer roll.
- Knowledge of British Weight Lifting's Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy and Procedures
- Basic knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of local statutory agencies, (social services, police, and Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)).
- Awareness of equality issues and child protection
- Basic knowledge of core legislation, government guidance and national frameworks for child protection. This can be gained through training.

## Skills

- Approachable
- Child –focused
- Basic administration
- Basic advice and support
- Communication

# Club Welfare Officer

- Maintaining records
- Ability to promote British Weight Lifting policy, procedures and resources
- Interpersonal

## Training Requirements

- Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport – Sports Coach UK
- Child Protection in Sport “Time to Listen” training for designated persons for child protection/welfare in sport (Club Level)
- The above courses are 3 hour training modules that are essential for welfare officers, the additional courses are recommended
- Equity training



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