

HAMPSTEAD AND HIGHGATE ANGLING SOCIETY

POLICY FOR SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

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1 SAFEGUARDING POLICY OVERVIEW

Hampstead and Highgate Angling Society (HAHAS) recognises its responsibility to protect children and vulnerable adults from abuse.

This safeguarding and child protection policy ('safeguarding policy') aims to ensure that

- 1) Children or vulnerable adults are not bullied or abused when participating in HAHAS' activities or on our social media (safeguarding).
- 2) Club members are able to spot indications that abuse might be happening elsewhere, and know how to report their concerns to social services or the police (child protection).

As well as protecting children and vulnerable adults, this safeguarding policy will also protect HAHAS members against false allegations of abuse.

This document sets out HAHAS' safeguarding and child protection responsibilities and outlines the procedures we should follow.

Please note, this safeguarding policy does not apply to tuition events which involve HAHAS members but which are not organised by HAHAS.

2 BACKGROUND

People who sexually or physically abuse children or vulnerable adults often get involved in sports clubs purely to gain access to them. Other forms of abuse (e.g. bullying) can occur in club environments.

Club volunteers working with children and vulnerable adults may spot signs that abuse is taking place elsewhere. There have been cases when child abuse carried on because people who suspected it did not know how to report it.

Even minor concerns should be reported, as the information provided may help the authorities piece together the wider picture of a case of abuse and take action to stop it.

3 RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 CLUB SAFEGUARDING OFFICER AND CHAIRMAN

The Club Safeguarding Officer and Chairman are responsible for:

- Ensuring that HAHAS members and other people involved in our activities are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and receive training and support.
- Making sure that HAHAS tuition events are identified as such – e.g. in their email communications with attendees, coaches organising tuition sessions should always put “Hampstead and Highgate Angling Society” under their name.
- Making this policy available to the parents and/or carers of the children and vulnerable adults that we teach, and informing them that HAHAS is not acting *in loco parentis* (that is, in place of a parent or guardian).
- Informally vetting all HAHAS members before they get involved in coaching (see *HAHAS Coach Vetting and Recruitment Process* on our website thehahas.co.uk)
- Running DBS checks on coaching volunteers as soon as they have worked with children or vulnerable adults three times, these checks to be renewed every three years (see *HAHAS DBS Procedures* document on our website thehahas.co.uk)
- Keeping records of any suspicions or incidents of abuse and storing them securely.
- Reporting any suspicions or incidents of abuse to the Angling Trust Chief Welfare Officer, social services or the police as appropriate.
- Taking action to deal with any cases of bad practice within HAHAS.
- Being open to suggestions for improvements to our working procedures.
- Reviewing this policy annually and whenever there is a change in the relevant legislation.

3.2 HAHAS MEMBERS AND OTHER PEOPLE INVOLVED IN OUR ACTIVITIES

All HAHAS members and other people involved in our activities are responsible for familiarising themselves with this policy and following the *HAHAS Code of Conduct* (on our website thehahas.co.uk). Their other responsibilities are as follows:

3.2.1 TUITION

- Never behave in a way that could be construed as abuse of any kind. For example, avoid physical contact unless it is necessary for teaching purposes (rarely the case in fishing), in which case explain why to the participant and their parents or carer beforehand
- Never work alone with children or vulnerable adults (this is a situation where abuse can occur, or false allegations of abuse can be made).
- Never engage sexually with participants under the age of 18. This includes innuendos, flirting and inappropriate gestures or words.

3.2.2 SOCIAL MEDIA AND PHOTOGRAPHS

- Never accept friend requests from U18s, but report them to the Club Safeguarding Officer or the Chairman.
- Do not communicate 1:1 with U18s on social media, WhatsApp etc. Instead, use HAHAS' Facebook page or WhatsApp group chat to make information publicly available to everyone.
- Obtain written permission before taking photographs of anyone, or using photographs of them on social media, on our website or in other publications. For U18s or vulnerable adults, get photo permission from their parent or guardian.

3.2.3 REPORTING CONCERNS

- Report to the Club Safeguarding Officer or the Chairman any suspicions that children and vulnerable adults are being abused, be that at a HAHAS event, elsewhere, or on social media. (See [Appendix A](#) for information about possible signs of abuse and [Appendix B](#) for advice on how to respond if a child or vulnerable adult tells you they are being abused.)
- Contact the police on 999 if any person is in immediate danger or if a crime is being committed.
- Report any concerns about bad practice within HAHAS, or suggestions for improvement, to the Club Safeguarding Officer or the Chairman.

PLEASE NOTE – our responsibility is not to decide if abuse is taking place, or to deal with it, but to report concerns to the authorities through the channels described above.

4 CONTACT DETAILS FOR REPORTING CONCERNS

HAHAS Club Safeguarding Officer:

Matthew Pierce 07780-997618

HAHAS Chairman:

Bob Gibbs 07946-630045

Angling Trust safeguarding lead:

Di Murray

safeguarding@anglingtrust.net

07730-765714

Camden Council Children's Services:

Phone: 020 7974 3317

Out of office hours (after 5pm, weekends and bank holidays): 020 7974 4444

Email: LBCMASHadmin@camden.gov.uk

Camden Council Vulnerable Adult's Services:

Phone 020 7974 4444

Email: adultsocialcare@camden.gov.uk

5 DEFINITIONS

5.1 CHILD

The Children Act 1989 defines a child as a person under 18 for most purposes.

5.2 VULNERABLE ADULT

The Protection of Vulnerable Adults Scheme (PoVA 2004) defines a vulnerable adult as a person aged 18 or over who has a condition of the following type:

- A substantial learning or physical disability.
- A physical or mental illness or mental disorder, chronic or otherwise, including addiction to alcohol or drugs.
- A significant reduction in physical or mental capacity.

5.3 FORMS OF ABUSE

The definitions below are based on *Working Together to Safeguard Children - A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children* (Department for Education 2018).

Children or vulnerable adults may be abused within a family or within an institutional or community setting (e.g. a sports club). They are mostly abused by people known to them. Children may be abused by adults or by other children.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse involves hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child or vulnerable adult.

An example of this in angling would be hitting someone as a punishment.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent maltreatment of a child or vulnerable adult so as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on their emotional development. It may involve making them feel worthless, unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may involve imposing unrealistic expectations on them, exposing them to the ill-treatment of others or causing them to feel frightened or in danger. It may involve the exploitation or corruption of children or vulnerable adults.

An example of this in angling would be getting angry and impatient with someone if they struggle with the activity in hand e.g. casting.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities whether or not they are aware of what is happening. It includes both penetrative and non-penetrative acts. It may include non-contact activities, such as showing pornographic materials to children or vulnerable adults, making them watch sexual activities or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. It includes grooming children or vulnerable adults in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males; women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can children.

An example of this in angling would be touching someone in an inappropriate way.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child or vulnerable adult's basic physical or psychological needs, in a way that is likely to result in serious impairment of their health or development. It may involve the failure to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter, failure to protect against physical and emotional harm or danger or failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of a child or vulnerable adult's basic emotional needs.

An example of this in angling would be asking people to carry on fishing in the rain without adequate clothes or an umbrella.

Bullying

Bullying is the most frequently reported kind of abuse or harm affecting children and vulnerable adults. It can be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour or language, usually repeated over time in such a way that the victim finds it difficult to defend themselves. It often takes place on social media. Please see the Angling Trust Anti-Bullying policy which is linked to on our website.

An example of this in angling would be abusing them via the club's Facebook page.

APPENDIX A - SIGNS OF ABUSE

Signs that a child or vulnerable adult may be being abused include the following:

- Unexplained injuries such as bruises, cuts or burns (particularly on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries) or injuries for which the explanation given seems unlikely.
- They describe what appears to be an abusive act involving them, or someone else expresses concern about them.
- Unexplained changes in behaviour (e.g. becoming very quiet or withdrawn, or displaying sudden outbursts of temper).
- Inappropriate sexual awareness / engaging in sexually explicit behaviour.
- Sudden or unusual distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
- Having difficulty in making friends.
- Being prevented from or unwilling to socialise.
- Overeating or loss of appetite; or a sudden weight change.
- Becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt.

Note that this list is not exhaustive and that these indicators alone are not proof that abuse is taking place. The important thing is to report any concerns to the Club Safeguarding Officer or Chairman so that they can investigate further or take it up with social services or the police.

APPENDIX B – RESPONDING TO A DIRECT DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE

Occasionally children or vulnerable adults may tell someone about abuse or bullying, usually because they trust them. This is called direct disclosure.

If this happens to you, it is important to respond calmly and dispassionately. You will need to:

- Listen carefully to what the child or vulnerable adult says and try not to interrupt. Make sure you understand what they are saying.
- Reassure them that they are not to blame and have done the right thing in telling you.
- Explain early on that to protect them (and perhaps others), you will need to involve other people; do not promise to keep the conversation secret.
- Ask questions for clarification only. Don't ask leading questions (that suggest a particular answer). Do not speculate or make assumptions.
- Do not make negative comments about the alleged abuser. Do not approach the alleged abuser.
- Record the conversation in writing straight away, using the person's words as closely as possible. Fill out the *HAHAS Safeguarding Incident Report Form* (on our website thehahas.co.uk) and contact the Club Safeguarding Officer or Chairman.

DOCUMENT VERSION HISTORY

Version	Date	Author	Comments
1	11-Jun-2023	Matthew Pierce	Initial draft, incorporating comments by Richard Nicoll. Reviewed by Bob Gibbs.
2	06-Jul-2024	Matthew Pierce	Redrafted following annual review as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checked with Richard Hadley (Angling Trust safeguarding lead) that there have been no changes to relevant legislation • Checked that contact details are still correct • Updated the first bullet in section 2.1 to clarify the scope of this policy • Minor edits to improve clarity <p>Changes in this version agreed by Bob Gibbs.</p>
3	25-Apr-2025	Matthew Pierce	Changed section 2.1 to make it clear that HAHAS coaching volunteers must be DBS checked once they have done 3 coaching sessions (it used to say 'more than 3'). Updated section 3 to show that Dom Lattimer is now the lead safeguarding officer at the Angling Trust (taking over from Richard Hadley).
4	11-May-2026	Matthew Pierce	Revised as follows and approved by Bob Gibbs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added a paragraph to section 1 stating that this policy only applies to tuition sessions organised by HAHAS • Added a paragraph to section 2 about how reporting safeguarding concerns may help the authorities piece together a picture of what is happening to a child or vulnerable person • In section 3.1 mentioned the need to identify HAHAS events as such and for informal vetting of HAHAS members before they start coaching • In section 3.2 changed "Angling Tuition Code of Conduct" to "Code of Conduct" (it applies to all HAHAS members and not just those doing coaching); added procedures relating to not working 1:1 with children, avoiding physical contact, social media policy, photo permission • In Appendix B – this now states that the safeguarding incident report form is on our website • Section 4 – Di Murray is now AT safeguarding lead; contact details updated <p>Discussed with Di Murray. She advises HAHAS to adopt Angling Trust safeguarding policies. This will take time, so in the meantime she is happy for us to continue using this document, but advises us to start using the AT Anti-Bullying Policy now, as this gives more recognition to bullying as the most common form of abuse.</p>