

# HALTON

## TENNIS CENTRE

### Halton Tennis Centre

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Registered Company No. 5783705

Charity Commission No. 1115040

## Safeguarding Children & Young People/Vulnerable adults Policy

### Introduction

Halton Tennis Centre operates its own Safeguarding Policy, as set out below and also in conjunction with the advice and guidance and codes of conduct provided by the Lawn Tennis Association.

Halton Tennis Centre provides a safe place to come and learn the game of tennis and participate in coaching and matches as well as social & and other sporting activities/events. In doing so, the charity's personnel (particularly its coaches) regularly come into contact with children and young people. The purpose of Safeguarding Policy is:

- to provide protection for anyone who visits **Halton Tennis Centre** facilities or take part in activities organised by **Halton Tennis Centre**
- to provide all **Halton Tennis Centre** representatives dealing with children with good practice guidelines
- to provide all **Halton Tennis Centre** representatives with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they have concerns that a person may be experiencing, or be at risk from, some form of abuse
- to guide **Halton Tennis Centre** representatives on responding appropriately to, and reporting, safeguarding concerns

### This Policy Applies to:

All staff, trustees and volunteers and associated persons such as those employed under a contract for services. The above will be referred to as **Halton Tennis Centre** representatives throughout this policy. All **Halton Tennis Centre** representatives will be made aware of this policy.

### Trustees

In accordance with the Charity Commission guidelines, there are 4 clear expectations of trustees

1. Provide a safe and trusted environment
2. Set an organisational culture that prioritises safeguarding

3. Have adequate policies and procedures and measures to protect people
4. Handle incidents as they arise and report to relevant authorities

## **Policy Statement**

**Halton Tennis Centre** is involved with the provision of tennis opportunities for children through coaching (both individually and groups) and matches. **Halton Tennis Centre** recognises that it has a duty of care towards those children who visit the tennis centre.

**Halton Tennis Centre** recognises:

- the welfare of the child is paramount
- all children without exception have the right to protection from all types of harm and abuse
- all suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- all **Halton Tennis Centre** representatives have a responsibility to report concerns

## **Recruitment of Halton Tennis Centre Representatives**

Only **Halton Tennis Centre** coaches/trainers have unsupervised contact with children and undergo Criminal (DBS) Checks as part of their LTA Licence process, which includes taking of references from referees.

If the result of the DBS check and/or the references raises doubts about the suitability of the individual to work with children, they shall not be appointed.

All other adults involved with the children are required to be checked in accordance with current LTA guidelines

## **Training**

The Welfare Officer responsible for dealing with Child Protection Issues shall keep themselves up to date in Child Protection issues and good practice.

## **Good Practice Guidelines**

All **Halton Tennis Centre** representatives will conduct themselves in a way that promotes best practice.

Child protection is about safeguarding children. Good practice can reduce the risk of behaviour being misinterpreted or adults making themselves vulnerable to allegations of abuse.

**Halton Tennis Centre** representatives should adopt a common-sense approach when dealing with children. There will be times when **Halton Tennis Centre** representatives must, for example, carry out first aid. These

guidelines should be followed wherever possible and if this is not possible, a colleague should be notified of the reasons for this.

These guidelines should apply in respect of all children who visit Halton Tennis Centre:

- treat all children equally with respect and dignity
- challenge inappropriate language or behaviour when used by colleagues or children
- ensure that individuals do not spend excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others
- if individuals are alone in a room with a child, they should leave the door ajar and make others aware of the situation
- no photographs or video footage of the children should be taken or published without the consent of the parents
- where possible, **Halton Tennis Centre** representatives should not touch children but if this is ESSENTIAL they should obtain the child's permission before they touch them. They should also provide a commentary of what they are doing and why. If a child is unconscious, a commentary should still be given to any colleagues or bystanders present.

### **Recognising Abuse and Responding to Allegations and Suspicions**

A child may tell a **Halton Tennis Centre** representative about abuse they have suffered or a third party, e.g. a parent or coach may inform the representative of suspicions.

**Halton Tennis Centre** representatives may also have concerns if a child:

- has suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, especially if on unusual areas such as cheeks
- uses sexually explicit language or displays sexually explicit behaviour
- displays sudden changes of behaviour
- displays a distrust of adults, especially those they would be expected to have a close relationship

**The above list is not exhaustive.**

The presence of one or more of the above is not proof that abuse has occurred as there may be other reasons. It is important not to overreact. Children often have bruises and it is difficult to spot what is different from the norm.

If a representative is worried, it is not their responsibility to decide if it is abuse but it is their duty to act on their concerns and if in doubt, report it to the Welfare Officer as soon as possible.

### **Reporting Procedure and Confidentiality**

If a child confides to a **Halton Tennis Centre** representative that they are being abused, the representative should:

- tell the child that they cannot keep the information secret if they think the child has been harmed
- keep calm
- reassure the child they were right to tell and make it clear they are not to blame for what has happened
- take what is said seriously
- keep questions to a minimum
- make a full written report of the conversation as soon as possible
- pass the report on to the Welfare Officer as soon as possible

Once the Welfare Officer has received the report, they can then decide what action to take.

If the visit was a school visit, they should ring the school within 24 hours of the report being passed to them and ask for the school's Child Protection "Designated Teacher" and refer the matter to them. Once this has been done, the Welfare Officer should send a copy of the report together with a letter confirming that the matter has been referred to the "Designated Teacher". A note should be made that this action has been taken and filed with the report.

If the visit was not a school visit, the Welfare Officer needs to decide whether to report the matter to Social Services/the Police. In coming to this decision, the Welfare Officer may liaise with the Chairman of Trustees if they consider this necessary. The Welfare Officer should follow this up by sending a copy of the report and a letter confirming that the matter has been referred to the appropriate agency. A note should be made that this action has been taken and filed with the report.

### **Allegations of Abuse against Halton Tennis Centre Representatives**

If an allegation of abuse is made against a **Halton Tennis Centre** representative, this should be reported to the Welfare Officer immediately. The Welfare Officer will liaise with the HTC CEO and/or Chairman of Trustees to decide whether the matter should be referred to the school/Social Services/the Police as above.

The allegation should be referred to the CEO and/or Chairman of Trustees to decide what action to take in respect of the **Halton Tennis Centre** representative and whether and how the **Halton Tennis Centre** representative is to be informed of the allegations.

### **Review of the Policy**

This policy shall be reviewed on an annual basis and updated as necessary.

**Adopted by the Trustees on 10th April 2018**

The Welfare Officer is: Tom Mayer & deputy Nick Leighton

LTA Child Protection

T: 0208 487 7008/7116

M (24 hour): 07971 141 024

E: [childprotection@lta.org.uk](mailto:childprotection@lta.org.uk)

[www.LTA.org.uk/childprotection](http://www.LTA.org.uk/childprotection) Statement of Intent

## **ANTI BULLYING POLICY**

We don't put up with bullying in our club. You should tell someone if you see bullying.

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our members, so they can play tennis in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our club. If bullying does occur, all players or parents should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

We are a TELLING club. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the Welfare officer or a member of the committee.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim. Bullying can be carried out by children or adults.

Bullying can have lots of different forms:

- Emotional – being unfriendly, excluding (emotionally and physically), sending hurtful text messages,

- tormenting, (e.g. hiding racquets/other equipment, threatening gestures
- Physical – pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
  - Racist – racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
  - Sexual – unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
  - Homophobic – because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
  - Verbal – name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing

Here are some examples of what we call 'bullying':

- Someone calling you names
- Being threatened
- Being pressured to give someone your money or your things
- Being hit or pushed
- Having your possessions damaged or broken
- Someone spreading rumours about you or about your family
- Someone posting hurtful comments or pictures on the web (such as on Facebook)

Why do we care about bullying?

Bullying is a serious problem. You have the right to stop it.

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Players who are bullying need to learn a different way of behaving.

A club has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

#### Objectives of this Policy

- To make sure that the club finds out about bullying and deals with it as well as possible.
- All committee members, coaches, volunteers, players and parents should know what bullying is.
- All committee members, coaches and volunteers should know understand this policy and should follow it when bullying is reported.
- All players and parents should know about this policy and should understand what to do if bullying arises.
- As a club we take bullying seriously. Players and parents should be assured that they would be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

How to spot if someone is being bullied?

A child might show that he or she is being bullied in lots of ways. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and they should investigate if a child:

- Says he or she is being bullied
- Is unwilling to go to club sessions
- Becomes withdrawn anxious or lacking in confidence
- Feels ill before training sessions
- Comes home with torn/damaged clothes or damaged
- Has possessions “go missing”
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Is frightened to say what’s wrong
- Gives unlikely explanations for any of the above

In more extreme cases

- Starts stammering
- Cries themselves to sleep or has nightmares
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- attempt or threatens suicide or runs away

These signs and behaviour may indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

### Procedures

1. Report bullying incidents to the Welfare Officer or ring the LTA Safeguarding Team
2. In cases of serious bullying, the club should contact the LTA for advice
3. Parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem
4. If necessary and appropriate, the police will be consulted
5. The bullying behaviour and threats of bullying will be investigated, and bullying will be stopped as quickly as possible.
6. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour and disciplinary action will also be considered where there have been serious acts of misconduct.
7. The club will initiate disciplinary action as per the club charter if the bully does not change his or her behaviour.

How we will work with the bully and the victim

If we decide (if necessary after receiving advice from the LTA) that it is appropriate for us to deal with the situation, we will follow the procedure outlined below.

1. Where the victim is comfortable to do so, and the bullying has not become very serious, reconciliation will be attempted by getting the parties together. It may be that a genuine apology solves the problem.
2. If this fails or is not appropriate a small panel (Made up from Club Chairman, Welfare Officer, Secretary, Committee members) will meet with the parent and child alleging bullying to get details of the allegation. Notes/ minutes will be taken for clarity, and these should be agreed by all as a true account.
3. The same panel will meet with the alleged bully and parent/s and put the incident raised to them to answer and give their view of the allegation. Minute's will be taken and agreed.
4. If bullying has, in their view, taken place, the panel will consider whether it is serious enough to take disciplinary action immediately under the club's normal procedures.
5. If disciplinary action is not taken immediately, the player should be warned and put on notice of further action i.e. temporary or permanent suspension if the bullying continues. Consideration should be given as to whether a reconciliation meeting between parties is appropriate at this time.
6. In some cases, the parent of the bully or bullied player can be asked to attend training sessions, if they are able to do so, and if appropriate. The club committee should monitor the situation for a given period to ensure the bullying is not being repeated.
7. All coaches involved with both players should be made aware of the concerns and outcomes of the process i.e. the warning.

In the case of adults reported to be bullying players under 18

1. We will contact the LTA for advice on the action to be taken. Bullying by an adult is child abuse and allegations will be treated very seriously.
2. In most cases in which adults are found to have bullied children, child protection awareness training is the minimum likely outcome. Serious disciplinary action by the club and/or the LTA could also be taken.
3. More serious cases may be referred to statutory services such as the police or social services. We will consult statutory services at an early stage if we think that this could be relevant.

#### Prevention

- The club has or is developing a written constitution, which includes what is acceptable and proper behaviour for all members of which the anti-bullying policy is one part.

- All players and parents will sign to accept the constitution upon joining the club.
- The club child protection officer will raise awareness about bullying and why it matters, and if issues of bullying arise in the club, will consider meeting with players to discuss the issue openly and constructively, seeking support from the LTA as necessary.

We would like to thank the ASA who have shared their ANTI-Bullying Policy for Clubs, from which this recommended LTA Club Anti-Bullying Policy has been developed

The ASA policy drew closely on that provided to schools by KIDSCAPE. KIDSCAPE is a voluntary organisation committed to help prevent child bullying. KIDSCAPE can be contacted on 0207 730 3300

**LTA Safeguarding - T: 0208 487 7116/7056, E: [childprotection@lta.org.uk](mailto:childprotection@lta.org.uk)  
W: [www.LTA.org.uk/childprotection](http://www.LTA.org.uk/childprotection)**

**Adopted by the Trustees on 10<sup>th</sup> April 2018**

**Reviewed minimum annually**