

## Child Protection Policy

### Introduction

The Modern Pentathlon Association of Great Britain Ltd (MPAGB) wishes to ensure that all those taking part in the sport(s) of modern pentathlon that they are protected and kept safe from harm while they are with staff, coaches and / or volunteers. This is particularly true in respect of children and vulnerable adults.

With this in mind the MPAGB recognises that it has a duty towards all those taking part and to any club providing opportunities for training and competing in the sport ensuring that support is provided to ensure all can do so with the highest possible standards of care.

All coaches and clubs should have a clear understanding of operating within an appropriate code of ethics, aware of what their 'duty of care' is and how this relates to their position in providing activities and being responsible for others.

As the organisers of activity, there is a possibility of someone being harmed. In a small percentage of cases action may be taken against you if the person decides to make a claim. This action may result in financial losses but can also harm your reputation or the reputation of your club and the MPAGB itself.

### A good definition of 'duty of care' is:

***"The duty which rests upon an individual or organisation to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure the safety of any person involved in any activity for which that individual or organisation is responsible"***

In an activity such as pentathlon, safety and keeping people safe is all about risk assessment and minimising the risks involved at all levels of participation. While all those taking part in activity have a duty to their neighbours, in organised activity we all have a heightened duty of care and as such we should be aware that the principal risks extend to the quality of control exercised by those in charge. Trainers, coaches, officials or administrators should all take 'reasonable' steps to safeguard those



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directly taking part in activities and at any time they may be deemed responsible for those in their charge in vehicles, during journey's to and from the activity, during events, team training events and camps etc.

The content of this document provides specific information in respect of Child Protection and the protection of vulnerable adults in order that coaches and clubs can appreciate their 'duty of care' with regard to these issues, risk assess their positions and support and advise those at risk.

The guidelines presented on the final pages of this document provide regions and clubs with ideas and recommendations to assist them in implementing specific procedures and safeguards to protect young and vulnerable athletes.

Further to this document you may wish to consult the following additional information.

- MPAGB Code of Ethics
- Sports Coach UK Code of Conduct
- MPAGB Complaints Procedures
- MPAGB Articles of Association and Disciplinary Procedures

*This Policy has been developed working with Sport England's Child Protection in Sports Unit and further details of the Unit's work can be found on their website [www.sportprotects.org.uk](http://www.sportprotects.org.uk).*

This Policy will be reviewed by March 2007

# Modern Pentathlon Association of Great Britain

## Policy statement

**The Modern Pentathlon Association of Great Britain (MPAGB) has a duty of care to safeguard all children involved in the sport of modern pentathlon from harm. All children have a right to protection, and the needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account. The MPAGB will use its best endeavours to ensure the safety and protection of all children involved in the sport through adherence to the Child Protection guidelines adopted by the Association.**

*A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989).*

In the MPAGB we believe that the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility, particularly when it comes to protecting children from abuse. Everyone in the sport can help; administrator, club official, coach, parent, friend and children themselves.

Abuse can occur wherever there are children at home, at school, in the park, at the club. Sadly, there are some people who will seek to be where children are simply in order to abuse them. We believe that everyone in the MPAGB has a moral responsibility and therefore a part to play in looking after the children and vulnerable adults with whom we are working. The Children Act 1989 indicates that anyone who has responsibility for the care of children should "do what is reasonable in all circumstances for the purpose of safeguarding or promoting the child's welfare."

***The policies and guidelines referenced within this document and its various appendices are those of the Modern Pentathlon Association of Great Britain and its affiliated member countries. The principles of both the policy and the appendices are based on our moral and ethical duty to ensure children and vulnerable adults can enjoy Modern Pentathlon and associated sports in a safe environment and as such they reflect current best practice.***

***Legal variation and social policy may require national association bodies to establish caveats to and separate guidelines to take account of home nation government, law and social work practices.***

While the welfare of young people is the MPAGB's first consideration in establishing a child protection programme it is also seen that the interests of coaches themselves need to be taken account of, particularly where falsely accused. A feature of the MPAGB's policy on Child Protection is to ensure that we provide coaches with access to a confidential advice, guidance and support, provided separately to that provided for those with concerns that abuse may be taking place.

## **These child protection procedures stem from the following principles:**

1. The child's welfare is the first consideration
2. Anyone under the age of 18 is classed as a child
3. All children, regardless of age, any disability they have, gender, racial origin, religious belief and sexual identity have a right to be protected from abuse.
4. Coaches, clubs and centres need to be provided with advice to raise awareness of best practice and guidance and support should they become involved in an abuse situation.

We know that if the procedures are to help to protect children, everyone involved in the sport needs to see and discuss them. We are, therefore, asking the regions, regional officers and club secretaries to make sure that they are widely distributed and discussed at regional, club and general meetings.

## **Good Practice Guidelines for coaches and volunteers**

By following these guidelines you will help to protect both the children in our sport and our coaches/helpers from wrongful allegations.

Avoid situations where you are alone with one child. The MPAGB acknowledges that occasionally there may be no alternative, for example, where a child falls ill and has to be taken home. We would stress, however, that one to one contact must never be allowed to occur on a regular basis.

If any form of physical support is required ask the athlete's permission, explain what you are doing and why to both the child and their parents/carers. Where possible ask parents/carers to be responsible for children in changing rooms. Always ensure that whoever supervises young people work in pairs.

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Where there are mixed teams/groups away from home, they should if possible always be accompanied by a male and female member of staff. If not parental permission must be gained from the coach/official. However, remember that same gender abuse can also occur

Don't allow physically rough or sexually provocative games, or inappropriate talking or touching.

If it's necessary to do things of a personal nature for children who are young or disabled, make sure you have another adult accompanying you. Get the consent of the parent/carer and if possible the child. Let them know what you are doing and why.

Ensure that any claims of abuse by a child are taken seriously and that it is dealt with by people who know what to do.

Ensure that the nature and intensity of training does not exceed the capacity of a child's immature and growing body.

Follow the MPAGB guidelines for photography and video use (see reference sheet 'Guidelines for use of Photographic and Filming Equipment')

Ensure your club adheres to the MPAGB best practice guidelines with particular reference to:

The MPAGB Code of Ethics / Sports Coach UK Code of Conduct.

This guidance on child protection and the Guidelines provided.

The requirements for coaches and helpers to have undergone disclosure.

Publicise the NSPCC Child protection Helpline 0800 800500.

### What is Child Abuse?

It's generally acknowledged that there are four main types of abuse,

### *Physical, Sexual, Emotional and Neglect.*

#### **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse is just what the term implies - hurting or injuring a child eg by hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning or biting them. In sport this might result if the nature or intensity of training is inappropriate for the capacity of the performer or where drugs are tolerated or advocated. Bullying is likely to come into this category see across

#### **Sexual Abuse**

Where young people are used by adults to meet their own sexual needs. It could range from sexually suggestive comments to full intercourse and includes the use of pornographic material.

#### **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse occurs when a child is not given love, help and encouragement and is constantly derided or ridiculed eg racial or sexual remarks.

It can also occur if a child is overprotected. Abuse can occur where a parent or coach has unrealistic expectations over what a child can achieve.

#### **Neglect**

Failing to meet children's basic needs such as food, warmth, adequate clothing, medical attention or constantly leaving them alone. It could also mean failing to ensure they are safe or exposing them to harm or injury.

#### **Bullying**

The bully in the sport can also be an adult the parent/carer who pushes too hard, the coach who adopts a win-at-all-costs philosophy or adult athlete who attempt to assert unacceptable behaviour on younger athletes to make them unwelcome or prevent them using association or club equipment. Bullying can also occur between young people.

What if you accidentally hurt a child?

If you accidentally hurt a child and they seem distressed in any manner, appear sexually aroused by your actions, or misunderstand something you have done, report any such incident immediately to another Coach/official and make a brief written note of it. You should also inform the child's parents/carers, preferably in person.

#### **Is touching OK?**

If a coaching technique would benefit from physical contact or support then first ask the athlete's permission (eg would you mind if I held your shoulders to show you what I mean?) It is useful to take time to explain why and how this is used to the athlete and their parent or carer.

Touching can be OK and appropriate as long as it is neither intrusive nor disturbing.

# Modern Pentathlon Association of Great Britain

## Indications of Child Abuse

There are physical and behavioural signs that might raise your concern about the welfare or safety of a child. They are only indicators not confirmation. Some examples are:

Where the child says that she or he is being abused, or another person says they believe (or actually know) that abuse is occurring  
has an injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent  
her or his behaviour changes, either over time or quite suddenly, becoming aggressive, withdrawn or unhappy  
appears not to trust adults, eg. a parent or coach with whom she / he would be expected to have, or once had, a close relationship.  
shows inappropriate sexual awareness for his/her age and some times behaves in a sexually explicit way.  
becomes increasingly neglected looking in appearance, or loses or puts on weight for no apparent reason  
Bear in mind that physically disabled children and children with learning difficulties are particularly vulnerable to abuse and may have added difficulties in communicating what is happening to them.

## If you have concerns about the welfare of a child:

Please remember the Golden Rule, it is not your responsibility to decide whether a child is being abused but we are asking you to fulfil your legal requirements and act on your concerns. Make a detailed note of what you've seen or heard but don't delay passing on the information.

If you are a member, or the parent/carer or friend of a member of a Club you should: Tell an appointed Child Protection club officer, if your club has one, or alternatively the Regional Child Protection Officer, chairperson, coach or any committee member, or at an event possibly an event organiser unless, of course you suspect them of being involved

**or**  
Contact the MPAGB Child Protection Officer (contact via MPAGB Office Tadley)

**or**  
If you need urgent advice contact the NSPCC Child Protection 24 hour HelpLine. 0800 800 500



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## If you are a club officer or event organiser you can:

Talk to the child's parents/carers about the concerns if you think there may be an obvious explanation such as a bereavement or pressure from their studies/exams.

If you need urgent advice contact the NSPCC Child Protection 24 hour HelpLine. Contact your local Social Services Department or, in an emergency, the Police.

If you are working with athletes away from home, at a training camp, perhaps, or a national / regional competition tell the team manager or the chief coach.

*NB Even if reporting your concerns to club appointed persons or club officials you are also required to write to the MPAGB to advise them of your concern and to whom you have reported it.*

Address the letter to:  
The MPAGB Child Protection Officer, Norwood House, University of Bath, Bath BA2 7AY

## If a child tells you that he or she is being abused

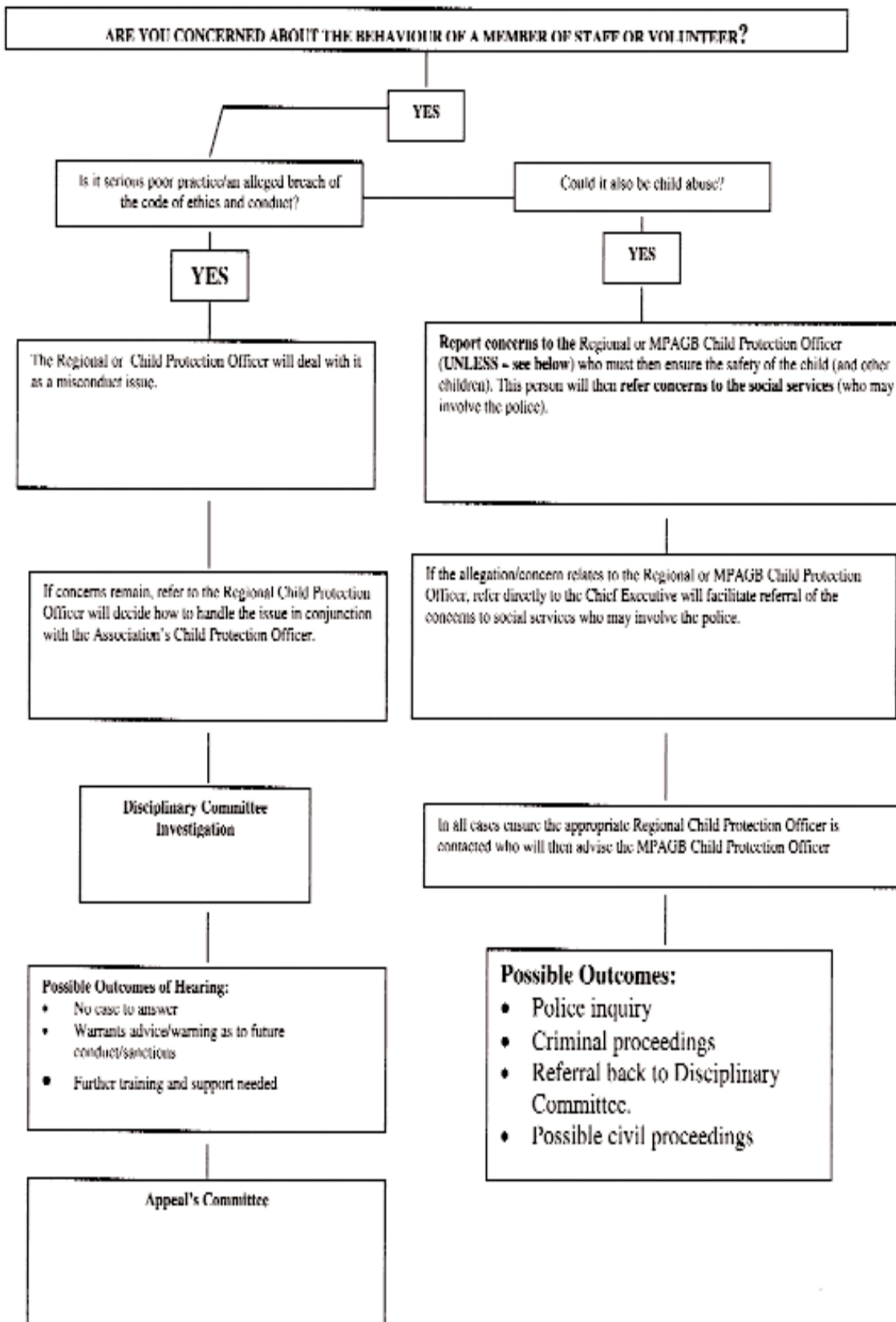
Stay calm.

Don't promise to keep it to yourself.

Listen to what the child says and, please, take it seriously.

Only ask questions if you need to identify what the child is telling you don't ask the child about explicit details.

Make a detailed note of what the child has told you but, as advised in the previous section, please don't delay passing on the information.



## Confidential

### Volunteers and Staff Working with Young People

Forename:  
Surname:  
Any other names known by:

Address:

Date of Birth:  
Membership Number:

I understand the nature of my role and responsibilities for the Modern Pentathlon Association of Great Britain and Region.

I confirm that I have read and understand the MPAGB Child Protection Policy and Procedures and Coaches Code of Ethics, that I am committed to the child protection policy of this organisation and I accept my responsibility to care for the children and young people with whom I come into contact. I can confirm that there is no reason why I should not have unsupervised access to children or young people whilst working with the organisation.

I hereby consent to agents of the MPAGB undertaking CRB, police and/or social service checks against me. I understand that the information contained on this form, or the results of checks with the above may be notified to my club/organisation.



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#### Self Declaration

1. Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence or been the subject of a Caution or a Bound Over order? **YES / NO**

2. Are you a person known to any social services department as being actual or potential risk to children or have you had a disciplinary sanction from a sports or other organisations governing body) relating to child abuse? **YES / NO**

If YES to any of the above please give details: (continue on back page if necessary)

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Note: *You are advised that under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (exceptions) order 1975 as amended by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions Amendment) Order 1986 you*

Signed by the above named individual:

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Date:

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Please return this form marked confidential DIRECT to: Child Protection Officer, MPAGB, at the address above.

## Athlete's Consent Form



Where young people participate in trips or events away from the Club parents/carers should be given full details regarding the organisation and administration of the activity, trip or event.

This form should be signed and returned to the respective programme Manager or appointed official before any activity or trip takes place. A copy should be kept by the Team Manager/Coach at all times. The original should stay with the respective programme Manager or appointed official.

Name of child

Date of birth

Parent / Carer

Address: Please give your home address and phone numbers. If you will be away from home during the trip please give an alternative address where you, or a relative or friend acting for you, can be contacted

Address:  
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Postcode:  
Tel: (Day) (Eve)  
Mobile:

Alternative Contact Name:  
Address:  
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Postcode:  
Tel: (Day) (Eve)  
Mobile:  
Relationship to athlete:

Family Doctor  
Doctor's Tel No:

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**Consent - Please read carefully:**  
I have had the activities of the Club explained and agree to my son/daughter taking part in these activities.

I confirm to the best of my knowledge that my son/daughter does not suffer from any medical condition other than those listed.

I consent to my child receiving medical treatment which, in the opinion of a qualified medical practitioner, may be necessary.

I confirm that my son/daughter is not subject to any court order prohibiting publication of their image.

I consent to my son/daughter travelling by any form of public transport, minibus or motor vehicle driven by a club coach or any other parent attending, to any event in which the club is participating. I agree to be at the pick up/drop off point at the agreed time.

I understand that the Club or Organisers accept no responsibility for loss, damage or injury caused by or during attendance on any of the clubs organised activities except where such loss, damage or injury can be shown to result directly from the negligence of the Club or the Organisers.

In your child's interests, it is important that the organising staff should know whether he or she suffers from any illness of medical condition.

Please use the space below to state in confidence any health or other matter concerning your child or which accompanying club members should be aware. Please also indicate if your child is receiving any medication, with details and dosage and / or specific dietary requirements.

Please state medical condition and/or medication

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian  
Date:

## Guidelines and Good Practice for Coaches



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### Good practice guidelines

All personnel should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from false allegations. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

### Good practice means:

1. Always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets).
2. Treating all young people/disabled adults equally, and with respect and dignity. Always putting the welfare of each young person first.
3. Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with athletes (e.g. it is not appropriate for staff or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child or to share a room with them).
4. Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children to share in the decision-making process; Making sport fun, enjoyable and promote fair play.
5. Ensuring that if any form of manual/physical support is required, it should be provided openly and according to guidelines, as it is difficult to maintain hand positions when the child is constantly moving. Young people should always be consulted and their agreement gained. Some parents are becoming increasingly sensitive about manual support and their views should always be carefully considered.
6. Keeping up to date with technical skills, qualifications and insurance in sport.
7. Involving parents/carers wherever possible. For example, encouraging them to take responsibility for their children in the changing rooms. If groups have to be supervised in the changing rooms, always ensure parents, coaches or officials work in pairs.
8. Ensuring that if mixed teams are taken away, they should if possible always be accompanied by a male and female member

- of staff. If not parental permission must be gained on the coach/official. However, remember that same gender abuse can also occur.
9. Ensuring that at tournaments or residential events, adults should not enter children's rooms or invite children into their rooms.
  10. Being an excellent role model - this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people.
  11. Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
  12. Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people and disabled adults - avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will.
  13. Securing parental consent in writing to act in loco parentis, if the need arises to administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment.
  14. Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.
  15. Requesting written parental consent if club officials are required to transport young people in their cars.

### Practices to be avoided

The following should be avoided except in emergencies. If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable it should be with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge in the club or the child's parents. For example, a child sustains an injury and needs to go to hospital, or a parent fails to arrive to pick a child up at the end of a session:

1. Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others
2. Avoid taking or dropping off a child to an event

## Guidelines for use of Photographic and Filming Equipment

There is evidence that some people have used sporting events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young and disabled sports people. The NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit has therefore issued guidelines to sport to help prevent this form of abuse. The nature of Modern Pentathlon and the environment in which events take place make it difficult and sometimes impractical to follow the recommendations in every situation. However, the MPAGB is encouraging Clubs and event organisers to take reasonable steps to protect young people and where it is appropriate apply the following guidelines.

The media and / professional / amateur photographers wishing to record an event or activity should register with the Event Organiser accompanied by proof of their professional identification. This should if possible, be in advance of the event to be filmed.

Anyone wishing to take zoom photographs or video at focus youth events should register with the Event Organiser. Organisers may wish to issue a label to highlight those who have been accredited.

Concerns regarding inappropriate or intrusive photography should be reported to the event organiser or official and recorded in the same manner as any child protection concern.

*NB This does not apply to coaches and helpers using video as a legitimate coaching aid but care should be taken in how it is stored.*

There is also concern that photographs of children used on web sites or in publications can make children vulnerable to abusers if accompanied by personal information. The



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MPAGB encourages the celebration of the achievements of our young athletes in the media but advise using the following guidelines.

### Easy rules to remember are:

1. When using a photo avoid using full name linked with an address.
2. Ask the athlete, parents or carers for permission to use their image (this could be included in the entry form or event details).
3. Inform athletes and parents if a photographer will be in attendance at an event and ensure they consent to the taking and publication of films or photographs.

### The following statement could be used to support the above:

In line with the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit and MPAGB recommendations, we require any person who wishes to engage in video or zoom photography to register with the Event Organiser prior to carrying out such photography. If you are concerned about any photography taking place please contact the events organiser.

# Modern Pentathlon Association of Great Britain

## Request for Permission to photograph at MPAGB Events



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### Photographing Participants

There is evidence that certain individuals (professional or amateur including parents and guardians) will visit sporting events to take inappropriate photographs or video footage of young and disabled sports people in vulnerable positions. All participants in the sport should be vigilant about this possibility. Any concerns during an event must be reported to a club official or other responsible person.

Photographers (professional or amateur including parents and guardians) must understand the following expectations of them in relation to child protection. They must:

1. Understand what is considered appropriate in terms of their behaviour and the content of the photography.
2. Have written consent to filming and/or photography and to its publication from the athletes and Guardians.
3. Not have unsupervised access to child athletes or one-to-one photo sessions during the event.
4. Have photo sessions outside the events or at a participant's home.

Permission for the filming/photographs to be taken both from the subjects and their parents/carers must be had in writing on the appropriate MPAGB Form.

Name of Photographer _____	Proof of ID: _____
Address: _____ _____ _____	Staff Signature: _____
Name of subjects: _____	
Reason or use, for the images: _____ _____ _____	

Signed declaration that the information provided is valid, and I understand the above conditions and that the images will only for the reasons given.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Guidelines and Good Practice for Coaches - cont'd



### Practices never to be sanctioned

The following should never be sanctioned. You should never:

1. Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
2. Share a room with a child
3. Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
4. Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
5. Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
6. Reduce a child to tears as a form of control
7. Allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
8. Do things of a personal nature for children or disabled adults, that they can do for themselves
9. Invite or allow children to stay with you at your home unsupervised

### Incidents that must be reported/recorded

If any of the following occur you should report this immediately to another colleague and record the incident. You should also ensure the parents of the child are informed:

1. If you accidentally hurt an athlete.
  2. If he/she seems distressed in any manner.
  3. If an athlete appears to be sexually aroused by your actions.
  4. If an athlete misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.
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## Supervision of away trips. club, and international teams



When Planning a trip it is important to allow sufficient time for all required arrangements to be made carefully. All staff and coaches should operate in a manner in line with the MPAGB Coaching Code of Ethics at all times.

Attention to the following factors will help to promote safety:

1. All such trips should be risk assessed.
2. It is a good idea to be familiar with the area/ venue to which you are travelling or to have made an exploratory visit. If this is not possible gather as much information as possible from a variety of sources.
3. Check to ensure that you and your club have sufficient insurance to cover the type of trip you are undertaking. When travelling abroad it is advised that the following cover should be in place: Medical cover, including repatriation expenses, compensation for loss of baggage, passports and money, Emergency expenses to cover accommodation and transport, legal assistance in recovery of claims.
4. When dealing with insurance matters be sure to obtain a full copy of the insurance policy and read carefully, noting exclusions.
5. Written permission of parents/guardians should be obtained for all overnight away trips. Parents/guardians should inform the Team Manager / Coach at the outset of any medical condition or special needs of their child.
6. Make sure that trip details and parental consent forms for extended trips and trips overseas are comprehensive in terms of the information and details of the trip in question and in the nature of the information sought.
7. When preparing paperwork to leave with a home contact consider the following: itinerary and contact number and address of the accommodation, list of all group members, contact names and address for all group members, copies of parental consent forms.
8. All adults who travel on away trips with children should be carefully chosen and if they have not already done so they should be asked to undergo a CRB check or complete a self declaration whichever seems most appropriate.
9. Adults and Coaches accompanying or participating in an away trip should make known any medical condition/special needs to the Governing Body in advance.
10. The roles and responsibilities of adults participating in away trips should be clearly defined.
11. All participants taking part should be aware of the behaviour and personal conduct standards expected of them at all times on the trip and all athletes, irrespective of age should adhere to the codes of conduct applied to the trip or team event in question.
12. It should be made clear that illegal and performance enhancing drugs and substances are strictly forbidden and that all other illegal drugs and substances although they may not appear on the official banned substances list are nonetheless also banned.
13. All participants should be clear that breaches of the established trip code of conduct will be subject to sanctions and that these will in the first instance be dealt with by the team manager.
14. The Governing Body of Sport should appoint a Team Manager for away trips. S/he should have overall responsibility for the athletes well being, behaviour and sleeping arrangements. They should be appointed as an official of the Association/Club for the duration of the trip on away trips, coaches should be accountable to the Team Manager in all non-performance related matters.
15. Where one athlete aged below eighteen years of age is travelling they must be accompanied by one adult official and parental consent must be obtained with regard to the identity of the adult.
16. Where the group of athletes are of mixed gender and under the age of 18, they must be accompanied by at least one adult official and parental consent must be obtained with regard to the identity of the adult. Ideally, where the group of athletes are of mixed gender and under the age of 18 there should be an adult official of each gender. As a norm, adults should not share a room with a child. Where the presence of an adult is needed there should be more than one child in the room with the adult. If athletes are sharing a room, it should be with those of the same age and sex.
17. Adequate adult: child ratios should be observed.
18. Coaches and leaders are discouraged from travelling alone in their cars with children.
19. If an athlete suffers a significant injury or an accident the parents/guardians should be informed as soon as possible.
20. Ensure that you have a procedure to cover any emergency situation that may arise. If an emergency occurs overseas, notify the British Embassy / Consulate, inform club and home contacts, notify insurers, especially if medical assistance is required, notify the tour operator or provider if appropriate, ascertain phone numbers for future calls (do not rely on mobile numbers).