

Braille Chess Association ("BCA")  
Safeguarding and  
Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy

## POLICY

Whilst the primary function of the BCA is to promote chess, it recognises its responsibility for the welfare of children and vulnerable adults (Vulnerable Persons) involved in its activities. This includes attending a BCA event, being included in an official BCA party attending a non-BCA event and more day-to-day activities such as telephone conversations and written communication, emails, correspondence chess and organisation of events.

It is the policy of the BCA to ensure the welfare of Vulnerable Persons by protecting them from physical or emotional harm, bullying and sexual harassment. The BCA also recognises that individuals not normally regarded as Vulnerable Persons can feel intimidated or threatened if subject to the kind of behaviour described above, and it is the BCA's policy that they should also be protected from harm. While it is natural that the Committee should take the lead in these matters, non-committee members have an important part to play in ensuring that the aims of this policy are achieved.

## OFFICIALS

The roles of Accredited Coaches may involve a considerable degree of contact with Vulnerable Persons. In general, the type of work will involve regularly caring for, supervising, training or being in sole charge of such people.

It is the policy of the BCA that it will only employ coaches who are extremely well known to the BCA or who have a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Scheme clearance together with a suitable independent reference. The same qualifying criteria will also apply to arbiters and to the duly appointed Leader of any official BCA party or team attending a non-BCA event within the United Kingdom or abroad.

## GUIDELINES

The guidelines in Section A, B and C are primarily aimed at those acting in an official capacity on behalf of the BCA at a BCA organised event, or as the Leader of a BCA party or team attending a non-BCA event within the United Kingdom or abroad. The guidelines in Section D are concerned with more day-to-day activities.

### *A) If you suspect a Vulnerable Person is being abused:*

- 1) Immediately inform the BCA official in charge of the event, or if the official is the suspect, inform their assistant or the most senior member of the committee at the event.
- 2) The official or committee member should write down the facts as far as they can be ascertained. The committee will proceed on the basis of this written account.
- 3) Ensure that the Vulnerable Person has access to an independent adult.
- 4) Ensure that no situation arises which could cause further concern.
- 5) Ensure access to confidential information is restricted to appropriate officials on a 'need to know' basis.

### *B) If a Vulnerable Person tells you about abuse by someone else:*

- 1) Allow the Vulnerable Person to speak without interruption, accepting what is said.
- 2) Alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgement.
- 3) Advise that you will try to offer support, but that you must pass on the information.

4) Same steps as 1 to 5 under paragraph (a) above.

C) *If you receive any allegation of abuse about any adult or about yourself:*

- 1) Immediately inform the BCA official in charge of the event.
- 2) Record the facts as you know them and give a copy to the BCA official.
- 3) Try to ensure that no-one is placed in a position which could potentially cause further harm.

The BCA official will take action which may include contacting the social services or the police; the same applies in scenarios covered in sections A and B of this policy.

The BCA official will also submit a report to the BCA Secretary. The Committee will begin its investigations on receipt of such a report. They cannot be expected to commence any formal investigation or disciplinary proceedings based purely on rumour.

D) *If you suspect or are informed that a Vulnerable Person is being abused in the course of more day-to-day activities of the sort listed at the start of this policy, or if you are the victim of such behaviour:*

- 1) Write down the facts as you know them.
- 2) If you are the victim of unacceptable behaviour, forward your written report to the Secretary or to the most senior member of the Committee who is not the cause of your complaint.
- 3) If you are acting on somebody else's behalf, ensure you have their permission to forward any report on to the Committee.
- 4) It is an important aspect of the BCA's procedures for dealing with alleged offences that transparency is paramount. While all due consideration will be given to matters of confidentiality, anonymous complaints will not be accepted.
- 5) The committee will try to resolve complaints internally, but if this is not possible and if the offence is of a sufficient magnitude, they will refer the matter to the social services or the Police.

#### Code of Conduct

When dealing with a complaint, BCA officials and/or the committee should follow the guidelines below.

Corporal punishment (smacking, slapping or shaking) is illegal and therefore must never be used. It is permissible to take necessary physical action in an emergency to prevent personal injury, either to the Vulnerable Person, other participants or adults, or damage to property.

Participants should not be shouted at directly, though raising of the voice is permissible in instances where it is necessary to be heard, and those tasked with carrying out disciplinary proceedings within the BCA must be allowed to be direct and uncompromising when doing so.

An explanation of any decision reached should be provided both to anyone who makes a complaint and the subject of any complaint.

When dealing with a complaint about the behaviour of a vulnerable person:

Where unacceptable behaviour does take place, appropriate sanctions, decided by a consensus of responsible people, should be applied to modify the behaviour.

Sanctions applied to each case should take account of the age and stage of development of the

Vulnerable Person, be given at the right time, be relevant to the action and be fair.

The participant must always be told why the behaviour is unacceptable and the reasons for applying a particular sanction.

Behaviours worth bearing in mind

The aims of this policy should be achieved if the following good advice is borne in mind both by committee and non-committee members.

Do treat everyone with respect.

Do provide an example you wish others to follow.

Do plan activities which involve more than one other person being present or at least are within sight or hearing of others. This applies to such activities as one-to-one training and travelling to or from chess events.

Do respect a person's right to privacy.

Do provide access for Vulnerable Adults to talk to identifiable responsible adults about any concerns they may have. Deal with any concerns in a sympathetic and appropriate manner.

Do encourage Vulnerable Persons to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like.

Do avoid situations that compromise your relationship with Vulnerable Persons and are unacceptable within a relationship of trust.

Do remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well-intentioned.

Do recognise that caution is required even in sensitive moments of counselling.

Do recognise that Vulnerable Persons with differing abilities have differing requirements.

Do recognise that Vulnerable Persons from different backgrounds may have differing values.

Do NOT permit abusive peer activities (e.g. bullying, ridiculing).

Do NOT play physical contact games with Vulnerable Persons.

Do NOT have any inappropriate physical or verbal contact with others.

Do NOT allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour such as tantrums.

Do NOT make suggestive remarks or gestures even in fun.

Do NOT let suspicion, disclosure or allegation of abuse go unrecorded or unreported.

Do NOT rely on just your good name to protect you.

Do NOT believe 'it could never happen to me'.

Last reviewed in May 2018