



Child Safeguarding – Codes of Conduct

Purpose

This document describes the standards of behaviour expected when:

- a) Children are present.
- b) Conduct by coaches.
- c) Children use club premises.
- d) Contacting children via social media, handling their data, using their visual images
- e) Organising trips for children.
- f) An emergency occurs.
- g) Handling media on safeguarding matters.

It should be read in conjunction with Croquet England's Codes of Conduct. This document also defines how any breaches in these standards are to be handled.

Definition

In this document the term "coach" includes Croquet England (or previously Croquet Association) qualified coaches and any volunteer or assistant helping such a coach when working with children.

General Conduct in relation to children

The aim for all clubs should be to create a welcoming and supportive environment for both children and adults that will minimise opportunities for abuse and false allegations.

Clubs have a responsibility to engage with the parents of child members. The first formal opportunity will be when children join as members. Parents must be asked to consent to their child taking part in club activities, to consent to photos/videos being taken and used in a range of circumstances, and to provide contacts and medical details. A template (T1) Parental Consent and Information Form on Joining is provided. Also available is a template (T2) Information for Children.

Children may feel awkward and out of place in a sport largely played by adults. To address this, they should be:

Respected – seek their views, value their contribution.

Included – in conversations and club activities.

Supported – be reassured they are in a safe environment.

Encouraged – as they learn the game at their pace.

If children are at a club without their parent or Responsible Adult present, ensure a minimum of two adults are in the vicinity. In addition to safeguarding needs, this is a sensible precaution in the case of accidents and meets Croquet England's insurance requirements.

All adult members should always:

- Treat all children with equal respect.
- Allow children privacy when using shared changing facilities.
- Coaching should be by demonstration only. Avoid physical contact in other circumstances.
- Only contact children through their parent unless the parent has expressly given permission for direct contact with the child.
- Avoid befriending or otherwise contacting children via social media.
- Use the minimum force necessary if physical contact is required to prevent injury or danger to a child or other person.

Adult members should never:

- Denigrate a child's croquet abilities. Particular care is required in streaming commentaries, online texting and social media.
- Drive a child in their car (except in an emergency) without specific parental consent.
- Have favourites among the children.
- Engage in any physical or sexualised behaviour with a child.
- Use obscene or sexualised language.
- Allow children to engage in swearing, bullying or other unacceptable behaviour.
- Ignore any concerns or allegations expressed by a child.

Conduct by Coaches when teaching a child or children.

All coaches working with children, whether in a voluntary or paid role, are expected to apply all Croquet England's coaching standards including its code of conduct for coaches.

All coaches should ensure they have the necessary DBS clearance for their role. See Safeguarding Requirement for DBS Enhanced Certificates.

Coaches are required to:

- Respect the right of parents to be involved, including ensuring that children's parents have the coaches' contact details.
- Coaches should ensure that they have the emergency contact and medical details of each child readily available.
- Ensure an adult to coach ratio on the lawn of no more than 4 children per adult, improving the ratio in consideration of any additional needs e.g., communication difficulties, disability or challenging behaviour.
- Avoid being alone with a child. If possible, ensure another adult is present.
- Never leave a child alone at the end of a session on the assumption or assurance that a parent is on their way to collect the child.

- Follow the Conduct for Trip Organisers given below. This includes obtaining parental consent for all trips to croquet events. The necessary templates (T3A) Letter to Parents for an Event, and (T3B) Parental Consent Form for an Event are provided.
- When using video recording equipment (including mobile phone, tablets, and similar devices) as a coaching aid, ensure that all images are appropriate and available to the parents or immediately deleted. Respect the wishes of the child or parent if they do not wish to be videoed.

Children's Use of Club Premises

Croquet England encourages children to use club premises; however, to achieve this safely requires some special measures:

When a child is on club premises, they must be accompanied at all times by at least one adult. This should be a parent, who may or may not be a club member, or another adult club member who the parent has formally designated as their child's Responsible Adult.

When a child is being coached, they must be accompanied by the coach and at least one other adult.

A child must not be given the responsibility for securing club premises.

Conduct when Contacting Children Online

Various methods of on-line contact are standard practice for many clubs and children are likely to be well-versed in their use. It is expected that all communication with children will be open, transparent and appropriate.

There are risks with on-line contact which include:

- Inappropriate access to, use or sharing of personal details (e.g. names, email addresses)
- Unwanted contact with children by adults with wrongful / questionable intent
- Being sent or sending offensive or otherwise inappropriate material
- Online bullying by peers
- Grooming for sexual abuse, county lines etc.
- Direct contact and abuse

For adults, risks include their communication with children being misinterpreted.

To reduce these risks, parental consent must be obtained before any member or associate contacts a child by phone, text or email, or engages in on-line coaching or similar activity. Parents should be offered the option of included in all such communication.

Note: Although consent is not legally required for young people aged between 16 and 18, it is still recommended that parents are informed of the intention to send their child emails or texts. It is also good practice to obtain the consent of the 16 to 18-year-old.

Conduct to Protect Data

Clubs are to protect children's personal data and medical details in line with the Croquet England's Data Protection Policy, and to ensure it is only used in accordance with parent's permissions or in an emergency.

Conduct for Trip Organisers

There may be opportunities for child members to play and/or receive coaching at another venue. These guidelines will help plan and run a successful trip.

Establish the following, in discussion with the Club Welfare/Safeguarding Officer:

- Reason for the trip.
- Date, times, venue.
- Cost and who will pay.
- Clothing, equipment, food or drink that may be required.
- What to expect at the event.
- Travel arrangements, including ensuring that the journey time is sufficient to allow for adequate comfort breaks to be taken and that they do not require a child to be transported alone by anyone other than their parents.
- In the event of an overnight journey – accommodation / meal arrangements.

If any child is not accompanied by their parent, they need to be accompanied by someone who is designated as that child's Responsible Adult. If the trip involves an overnight stay that person needs to hold a DBS Enhanced Certificate with child barred list check, see Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities.

For each child travelling, brief his/her parent on the trip details and provide them with contact details of the trip organiser, venue and drivers. You should also check if the child has any medical requirements (e.g. for travel sickness, other reasons) or allergies that might impact on the trip.

Ensure parent's current contact details are known, together with emergency contact phone numbers.

An exchange of emails is useful as a reminder to all parties to avoid misunderstandings and to inform other passengers that a child is travelling with them, while also serving as a written record.

It is also useful to have a discussion with the child and their parent about the behaviour expected during the trip and the possible consequences of misbehaving and to ask the parent to remind their child of this immediately prior to the trip.

Accommodation:

If overnight accommodation is required it should be assessed prior to booking regarding its suitability for sleeping, changing and toileting arrangements. A child should only share a room with their parent.

On arrival the accommodation's suitability should be confirmed and it should be checked that the child understands:

- Managing the room key.
- Meal arrangements.
- Schedule of activities.
- Securing valuables.

In an Emergency

The following actions are suggested if an emergency arises:

- Call emergency services.
- Keep everyone safe.
- Inform child's emergency contact.
- Consider whether there are safeguarding implications. If so, follow the Child Safeguarding – Reporting Procedures.
- Make a written record of everything as soon as possible.
- Do not speak to the press.
- On return, complete the Child Safeguarding – Child Incident Report Form and notify the Club Welfare/Safeguarding Officer and/or the National Safeguarding Officer.

Conduct when Handling the Media on Safeguarding Matters

Press enquiries on any topic are likely to come from a variety of sources and responding to each on an ad hoc local basis is a recipe for confusion. Likewise, it is important not to respond on an ad hoc basis to tweets, Whats App messages or other contact via social media etc on child safeguarding topics within croquet. It is important that all responses on any child safeguarding issue (especially those relating to any individual case) are handled by a single person, namely the Board of Trustees member with responsibility for Welfare and Safeguarding.

If an enquiry comes in:

- Take the contact details.
- Note the nature of the enquiry.
- Give an assurance that a response will be made in due course.
- Brief the National Safeguarding Officer and Board of Trustees member, at the earliest opportunity.

Conduct when photographing, videoing or live-streaming

Photography, Video, and Live Streaming can all be excellent ways of celebrating and promoting croquet. Photos of people enjoying the sport can be great promotional tools, but when personal information is added to photographs, these images can be used to identify people and put their safety and privacy at risk. Photographs can also be adapted for inappropriate use.

Images of children playing croquet should only convey best practice and positive aspects of croquet.

When advised of an event, parents are told that their child may be photographed/filmed - see Template (T3B) Parental Consent Form for an Event. If they do not want their child's name associated with such images, they have to advise the event organiser. In such circumstances, it is the event organiser's responsibility to ensure that the parent's wishes in this respect are met.

Unsupervised access to children or one-on-one photography or filming sessions, at the event or elsewhere, is not permitted. Indoor filming or photography of children should be limited to the public area of the pavilion/clubhouse, unless express permission is obtained.

A child's personal contact details (e.g. postal or email address, telephone numbers) should never be published. Note: This applies even if parental permission has been given for the child's photograph to be used.

Breaches of behaviour

Any suspected or actual breach of these Child Safeguarding - Codes of Conduct must be reported as a safeguarding concern, see Child Safeguarding – Reporting Procedures

Further action will depend on the nature and severity of the breach.

References

Child Safeguarding Policy
Child Safeguarding – Responding, Recording and Reporting Procedures
Child Safeguarding – Child Incident Report Form
Child Safeguarding – Templates
Child Safeguarding – Guidance
Codes of Conduct
Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities
Safeguarding Requirement for DBS Enhanced Certificates.

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