



## Gateway Wheelers

Development Officer: Sarah Young,  
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Phone 0791 3905422



# Child Protection Policy

## Safeguarding Children and Young People

### Purpose:

The welfare of children and young people is a key concern of Gateway Wheelers, which aims to provide an environment within which children and young people are safe and secure.

Gateway Wheelers are committed to ensuring that all those associated with the club have positive and enjoyable disabled cycling and social experiences. Consequently we are committed to ensuring that all children and young people who take part in our activities are safeguarded and kept free from harm. We will ensure that:

- Everyone is treated with respect
- Activities take place in a safe and secure environment
- Adults who work with young people are checked and cleared through the criminal records bureau
- Opportunities exist for young people and parents/primary carers to talk to us about any concerns they may have
- Young people and parents/primary carers feel comfortable and confident enough to discuss attitudes and behaviours they do not like
- Adults associated with the club will take appropriate action when young people or parents/primary carers express concern about abuse
- No adult is left alone with individual young people

### Service Definitions:

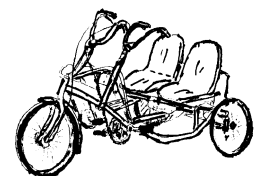
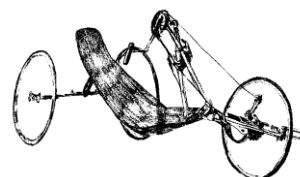
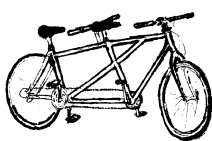
'Abuse' can include:

#### Physical abuse:

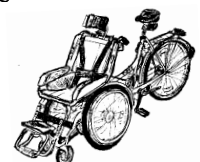
The intentional, non-accidental use of physical force on the part of a parent/primary carer or care giver that aims to hurt, injure or destroy that child.

#### Emotional/psychological abuse:

The persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to the child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.



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It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

### **Sexual abuse:**

The involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children or adolescents in sexual activities they do not fully comprehend, or to which they are unable to give informed consent, or that violate the social taboos of family roles.

### **Neglect:**

When chronic inattention is given to the child by their parents/primary carers or care givers in the areas of medical, educational, stimulative, environmental, nutritional, physical or emotional needs.

### **Discriminatory:**

Swearing and name calling which involve racist remarks or about a person's disability, age or gender.

### **Financial or material:**

Theft, fraud, exploitation, possessions or benefits

### **Procedures:**

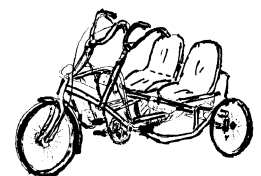
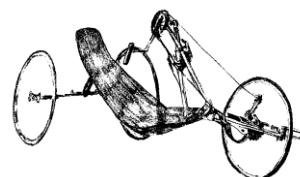
- This policy operates alongside Gateway Wheelers:
- Equal Opportunities policy
- Operating Guidelines
- Volunteer Guidelines

And is reviewed annually against the County Durham and Darlington Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) Child Protection procedures and guidelines.

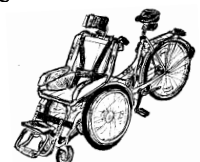
Gateway Wheelers is committed to including the views of children and young people in its policy development and review procedures.

### **Role of Secretary and Designated Person:**

Whilst all committee members, staff and volunteers must work co-operatively, a co-ordinating responsibility rests with the secretary, or in her/his absence a designated person.



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The duties of the Secretary and Designated Person are:

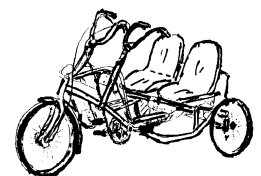
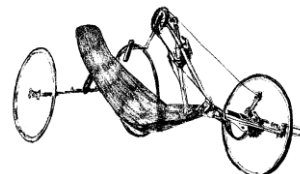
1. To ensure that all committee members and adult leaders are aware of the requirement to report any suspicion of child abuse to the secretary or designated person.
2. To report all cases of suspected child abuse to the District or Division Commissioner.
3. The name and contact details of the secretary and the designated person are available from the Development Officer at the Chester-le-Street office.

### Responding to Disclosure – Advice for Staff, Committee Members and Volunteers:

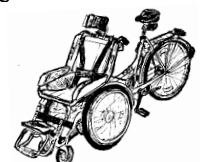
1. When a child/young person discloses abuse to any staff, committee member or volunteer, he/she must inform the child/young person that it may be necessary to share the information with someone else in order that further harm is prevented.
2. Keeping 'secrets' with the child when you have been told of an abusive situation is not an option.
3. You can only promise to act in what you know to be in the best interests of the child/young person, and that you will keep them informed of what is happening.
4. Listen carefully to what the child/young person is saying.
5. Take seriously that the child/young person is saying.
6. Do not ask detailed questions or press the child/young person for more information as this will prejudice any investigation.
7. Do not make judgements or say anything about the alleged abuser.
8. Write down carefully what the child/young person said as soon as possible. Date, time and sign your record.
9. Any information shared with Gateway Wheelers, or known to Gateway Wheelers is confidential and will not be discussed with anyone not directly involved in the investigation.
10. Keep the child/young person informed of any actions you are preparing to take.
11. Make sure the child/young person is safe and supported whilst under your supervision.
12. Inform the secretary or designated person of the disclosure at the earliest opportunity. They will make a referral to either Social Care and Health or the Police.
13. In the event of both the secretary and designated person being unavailable, committee members or volunteers must report the disclosure to Social Care and Health, or the Police.

### Possible signs of child abuse:

Staff, committee members and volunteers associated with the club will look out for the following signs of child abuse. However, it is understood that not all young people manifesting these symptoms will necessarily be suffering abuse. Caution, sensitivity and common sense will shape precisely how to respond to these symptoms.



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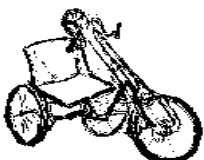
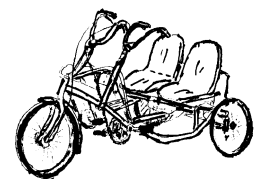
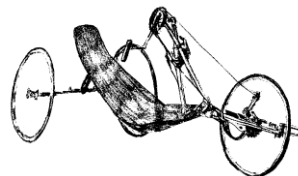
## If a young person:

- a. Becomes withdrawn or isolated
- b. Becomes aggressive or starts seeking attention
- c. Becomes afraid of certain people
- d. Develops chronic medical problems such as stomach pains or headaches
- e. Acts in sexually inappropriate ways toward adults or peers
- f. Becomes anorexic or bulimic
- g. Fails to thrive
- h. Is often hungry
- i. Has regular accidents
- j. Has poor personal hygiene
- k. Is regularly tired
- l. Is reluctant to go home
- m. Wears inappropriate clothing
- n. Develops poor social relationships
- o. Exhibits inappropriate emotional responses
- p. Exhibits dramatic changes in mood or behaviour
- q. Engages in drug or alcohol abuse
- r. Runs away
- s. Feels depressed
- t. Has bumps, bruises or wounds
- u. Has unconvincing explanations for bumps, bruises or wounds
- v. Tells of a friend with a problem of abuse

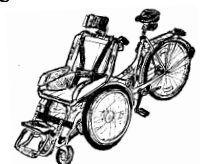
## We will take steps to establish whether the young person is suffering abuse.

### If child abuse is suspected, staff, committee members and volunteers associated with the club will:

- Ensure that the secretary/designated person is made aware of the issue/situation.
- Ensure that the allegation/suspicion is taken seriously and that it is reported and recorded,
- Ensure that the appropriate authorities or charities are advised about the allegation/suspicion. (e.g. Social Services, Police, the NSPCC, Childline.)



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unsung heroes

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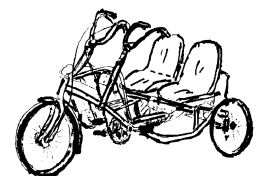
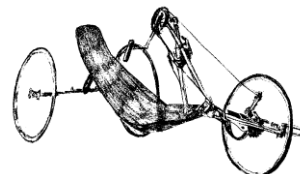
### Advice about initial disclosures deriving from young people.

#### Staff, committee members and volunteers will:

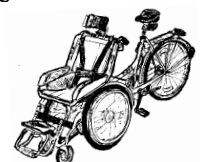
- Reassure the young person that they are doing the correct thing by telling an adult
- Reassure the young person that it is right to talk
- Not blame the young person for the abuse suffered
- Listen to the young person carefully
- Take the young person's word because young people very rarely lie about child abuse
- Promise support to the young person
- Inform the young person about what you will do
- Contact Social Services or the Police if it is felt that the young person is likely to be at risk if they return home
- Thank the young person for confiding
- Report and record the allegation.

#### Staff, committee members and volunteers will not:

- Promise confidentiality to the young person, otherwise nothing can be done about the allegation and the problem of abuse will persist
- Be judgemental or show anger, disgust or disbelief
- Ask direct questions of the young person
- Minimise the effects of the alleged abuse
- Become unnecessarily involved
- Over dramatise or criticise
- Confront the young person with the abuser or abusers
- Try to force the young person to forget.



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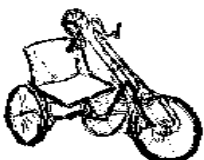
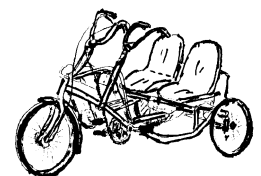
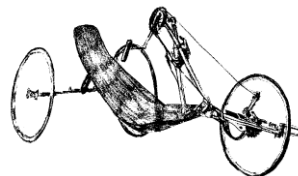


### **When recording allegations of, or suspicious about, child abuse staff, committee members and volunteers will try to provide the following information:**

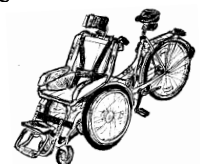
- Name of the young person
- Age
- Address
- Any special factors (e.g. the young person has a disability, lives apart from the biological mother/father, has alleged abuse in the past, etc.)
- Are you reporting your concerns or someone else's
- Brief description of what has prompted your concerns, including dates, times and specific incidents if possible
- Are there any physical or behavioural signs that prompted, or support, your concerns
- Have you spoken to the young person who is said to suffer the abuse? If yes, what was said?
- Is anyone alleged to be the abuser?
- Have you consulted anyone else?

**If allegations are made by a young person against a person not associated with the club,** Social services will be immediately notified and action taken on their advice. The decision as to whether to notify the young person's parents/primary carers will be made in consultation with social services.

**If allegations are made by a young person or parent/primary carer against another young person in the club,** Social services will be immediately notified and action taken on their advice. If there are genuine grounds for concern, the parents/primary carers of both children will be notified. If it proves impossible for both young people to remain within Gateway Wheelers as an enquiry into the allegations is undertaken, the young person accused of abuse will not be allowed to attend. The outcome of the enquiry will determine whether the young person accused of abuse is allowed to return to the club.



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**If allegations are made by a young person or parent/primary carer against a staff member, committee member or volunteer associated with the club,** Social services will be immediately notified and action taken on their advice. If there are genuine grounds for concern, the person associated with the club will be immediately notified of the allegation made against them and they will not be allowed to work in any shape or form with the young people in the club. Others associated with the club are advised that they should not discuss with the accused any aspect of the alleged incident/s or the enquiry that follows disclosure, as this may seriously affect the outcome of the enquiry. The outcome of the enquiry will determine whether the person accused of abuse is allowed to continue to work with the club.

**Early police intervention may be required in cases of extreme abuse.** Advice about police intervention will be taken from social services.

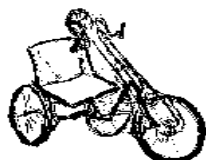
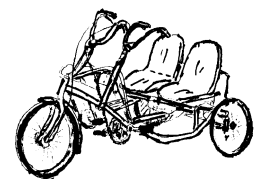
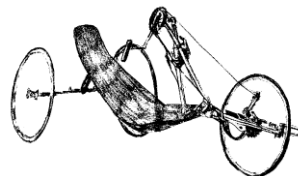
### Monitoring and evaluation:

Once a year staff and committee members associated with the club will meet to discuss the extent to which practice conforms with the content of the policy. This will inform the annual review of policy which will include consultation with the children and young people in the club.

This policy was first adopted on: 4 July 2003

This policy was reviewed and amended June 2007.

This policy is to be updated on : June 2008



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