

THE CASTLE CHILD AND VULNERABLE ADULT POLICY

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PURPOSE

This document outlines The Castle's policy relating to the protection of children and vulnerable adults. Procedures for dealing with actual or suspected abuse or poor practice are in **CP02 Castle CVAP Procedures**. Guidance for staff are in the **CP03 Castle CVAP Guidelines**.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all Children and Vulnerable Adults that The Castle is directly responsible for, such as N4 Climbing, Castle Comp Squad and other climbing sessions led by Castle staff. The Castle also has a degree of responsibility for other children and vulnerable adults using the centre, for example Geckos. The associated CVAP procedures and guidelines are mandatory for all staff.

DEFINITIONS

Child. Anyone under the age of 18.

Coach. A qualified climber whose primary purpose is to help the client achieve their goals usually relating to performance.

CVAP. Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection.

Instructor. A qualified supervisor whose primary purpose is the teaching of safety skills or the supervision of inexperienced climbers.

Vulnerable Adult. Anyone over the age of 18 who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Castle has a legal responsibility to protect children/vulnerable adults in its care from harm perpetrated either face to face or via IT (phones, internet, social media, etc.) The Castle takes its responsibilities seriously and has developed a policy and procedures designed to protect all children and vulnerable adults for whom it has responsibility.

Fundamental elements to Castle CVAP procedures and guidelines are:

- Staff will follow CVAP guidelines to ensure that they do not expose themselves unnecessarily to the risk of accusations of abuse/poor practice.
- All suspicions of child/vulnerable adult abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

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- Accusations of abuse/poor practice will be dealt with in a fair, transparent and open manner while respecting the need for confidentiality.
- Anything which could be perceived as either poor practice or abuse in relation to the care of children/vulnerable adults must be reported to Castle management.
- Where the Castle is not directly responsible for the safety of a child we will nevertheless take reasonable steps to ensure that the child is properly looked after.

E-SAFETY: SOCIAL NETWORKING, EMAIL AND MOBILE PHONES

The Castle recognises that the use of social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter is a rapidly growing phenomenon and is increasingly being used as a communication tool of choice by young people and more recently by adults. Social networking is a great tool to promote N4 Climbing Club/Comp Squad if used in the correct way. Whilst these technologies provide exciting opportunities, they are accompanied by dangers and negative consequences if abused by users.

The Castle provides detailed guidance for staff and parents on e-safety and young people.

THIRD PARTIES

For third parties who regularly use the centre for climbing activities for children and/or vulnerable adults (eg Geckos) the Castle will ensure that they have a satisfactory CVAP Policy and Procedures in place.

For school and youth groups, the group leader is responsible for obtaining parental consent and they must declare that they have done so on the Group Supervision Form.

REGISTRATION

Children under 16 supervised by a registered adult climber must have received the appropriate parental consent. It is the responsibility of the supervising adult climber to obtain this and they must declare that they have done so on the Novice Supervision Form.

Assessed under 18s (14 to 17 year olds) must have received parental consent to climb in the centre unsupervised.

PARENTAL CONSENT

Parental consent is required for any children who will be left in the centre unaccompanied. As a minimum the parent/guardian must be aware that climbing is a dangerous activity which can result in personal injury or death. The parental consent form should also include emergency contact details, relevant medical information and consent to First Aid being given in the case of an accident.

Parents for children under 12 may also consent to their child leaving the centre unaccompanied at the end of their session. Where a child is required to be picked up, they must nominate who can do so. Children over 12 will be allowed to leave the centre unaccompanied unless the parent specifies otherwise. Parental consent will be renewed every year to ensure that the information is up to date.

The Castle will keep on file (at Reception) parental consent forms for N4Climbing Club, The Castle Comp Squad and assessed under 18s. Parental consent forms for Geckos are also kept at Reception.

For school and youth groups it is the responsibility of the Group Leader to ensure that they have obtained parental consent. For novice climbers, it is the responsibility of the Supervising Climber to ensure that they have obtained parental consent.

PHOTOGRAPHY

The Castle permits casual photography/filming in the centre of any climber by their parent, guardian or peer. Anything else may only be done with the permission of The Castle and the consent of the subject and their parent (if under 18). The Castle will not use images of children or vulnerable adults without their consent.

For special events such as competitions consent may be obtained on a registration form or by placing a prominent notice to warn climbers/visitors that shooting/filming is taking place. It is the right of all climbers to refuse to be photographed/filmed without their consent. The Duty Manager/instructor/coach must assist with enforcing this right.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Group Leaders act *in loco parentis* for a group of children who have been entrusted to them by their parent. They must ensure that they have received informed parental consent for any activities. They are responsible for the safety of the children/vulnerable adults in their care while in the centre, especially before and after the climbing session.

Instructors and **Coaches** are responsible for the safety and welfare of the climbers on their sessions from when the session starts until the Child or Vulnerable Adult is handed back to their parent/carer/group leader.

The **Course/Bookings Manager** maintains the Child Protection documents and is the main person who will deal with any suspected abuse or poor practice. With the support of the HR department, they are responsible for recruitment, induction, work allocation and ongoing training of instructors. They manage group bookings and ensure that course participants have the appropriate parental consent where required.

The **Duty Manager** is responsible for the day to day operations of the centre. As such they may be the initial point of contact for dealing with suspected abuse or poor practice if the Course/Bookings Manager is not available.

The **Centre Managers** should be informed of any actual or suspected poor practice or abuse and can replace the Course/Bookings Manager if they are not available or if the allegations concern them.

RECRUITMENT, INDUCTION, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Instructors and Duty Managers undergo a rigorous recruitment and selection procedure. Shortlisted candidates are interviewed and must provide two references. Their identification and original qualification documents are inspected and copies kept in their personnel file. Those working directly with children and vulnerable adults must undergo a CRB check at least every three years.

Successful candidates are observed as part of their initial training. They are given CVAP training in their induction and will receive CVAP training annually. All staff training will be documented and records kept by the Courses/Bookings Manager. Additional training is available for free to BMC members.

Instructors and Managers are appraised annually.

DEPARTMENTAL STANDARDS

All staff members are expected to abide by the Castle CVAP guidelines and follow CVAP procedures. In addition, the Castle has a Code of Conduct which covers the behaviour we expect from all staff. Failure to comply could result in disciplinary action.

SUPPORT

Castle Staff have a right to

- be supported throughout an investigation of suspected abuse or poor practice including access to professional support services;
- access on-going training and information on all aspects of managing activities for youths/vulnerable adults;
- support in the reporting of suspected abuse/poor practice;
- be protected from abuse by children/youths, other adult members or parents; and
- not be left vulnerable when working with children/vulnerable adults.

PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

The Castle has **CVAP Procedures (CP02)** and **Guidelines (CP03)** to conform to industry best practice as outlined by the British Mountaineering Council and NSPCC Children in Sport Unit.

COMMUNICATION

Castle CVAP policy, procedures and guidelines will be made available to all staff and interested parties on request.

DOCUMENT HISTORY

Code	Name	Issue	Date	Author(s)	Notes
	Castle Child Protection Policy	1	July 2004	Dean Plant	First issue
CP01	Castle Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy	2	December 2013	Iwona Kulczynska-Evans / Audrey Seguy	