

CASTLE ADULT SAFEGUARDING POLICY



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PARTICIPATION STATEMENT

All climbing activities have a risk of serious injury or death. Participants must recognise that even if they follow all good practice there may still be the risk of accident and injury. It is the responsibility of the participant to adhere to the conditions of use.

As with all sporting activities, injuries are possible in climbing and might be sustained despite the safety systems in place.

Castle sessions are supervised by qualified, experienced Instructors/Coaches. Supervised climbers should never belay, climb or boulder without the permission of their Instructor/Coach. They must remain with their Instructor/Coach at all times and follow directions given.

DEFINITIONS

Safeguarding. Safeguarding refers to the action taken to promote the welfare of individuals, particularly children and adults at risk, ensuring they are protected from harm, abuse, and neglect. This includes the physical, emotional, and psychological safety of participants in all activities.

Adult at Risk. (England Care Act 2014)

An adult at risk is an individual aged 18 years and over who:

- (a) has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) AND;
- (b) is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect, AND;
- (c) as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

Abuse: Abuse can be physical, emotional, sexual, financial, neglect, or any other form of mistreatment that harms the adult at risk's wellbeing.

Poor Practice. Behaviour that is inappropriate and may be causing concern/harm to a child.

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

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

DSL. Designated Safeguarding Lead.

SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

The Castle Climbing Centre is committed to safeguarding, protecting, and promoting the welfare and well-being of all individuals at the centre, particularly children, young people, and at-risk adults. We recognise our duty to ensure that everyone has a positive and enjoyable experience while participating in our activities and is fully protected from harm, abuse, or exploitation.

Our safeguarding policy, along with the associated guidance and procedures, prioritises the protection of children, young people, and adults at risk. We are dedicated to ensuring that all individuals, regardless of age, ability, disability, gender identity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, or socio-economic background, are provided with a safe environment to engage in our services.

We acknowledge that some individuals—particularly those with disabilities, additional needs, or from ethnic minority communities—may be at increased risk of harm, and we take our responsibility to safeguard them seriously. We are committed to taking all reasonable and appropriate steps to protect and support them.

Everyone associated with The Castle Climbing Centre, including staff, volunteers, and participants, is expected to uphold our safeguarding principles, ensuring a culture of respect, vigilance, and responsibility in maintaining a safe environment for all.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate Castle's commitment to safeguarding adults and ensure all involved are aware of:

- Relevant legislation, policies, and procedures for safeguarding adults.
- Their role and responsibility in safeguarding adults.
- How to report concerns about an adult's welfare or wellbeing. Procedures for handling actual or suspected abuse or poor practice are outlined in the **CSP02 Castle CSP Procedures**, and staff guidance can be found in the **CSP03 Castle CSP Guidelines**.

Key Points:

- **Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility:** All concerns must be reported promptly. It is not for you to decide if abuse or poor practice has occurred, only to report the concern.
- **A safety culture** is essential, where safeguarding is paramount.
- **Respect and listen to all individuals**, ensuring a culture of inclusion.
- **All concerns** will be taken seriously and addressed in a timely manner.
- Provide **guidance and support** to all involved in climbing activities at the Castle.
- Ensure a **positive, enjoyable, and safe experience** for everyone, regardless of their background, ability, or identity.
- **This Policy is mandatory** for all staff, volunteers, and participants.

SCOPE

This Safeguarding Adults Policy and its procedures apply to all individuals connected with the Castle Climbing Centre, including Board members, staff, volunteers and customers and cover all concerns regarding adult safety. Partner organisations, such as Geckos, Babcock, Yoga/Pilates instructors and personal trainers, are expected to follow the principles and practices outlined in this policy.

The policy specifically applies to all adults, including those at risk, for whom the Castle holds direct responsibility, such as participants in climbing courses and sessions led by Castle staff. The CASP procedures and guidelines are mandatory for all staff.

COMMITMENT

The Castle Climbing Centre is committed to ensuring all adults, including those at risk, can participate in climbing activities safely, securely, and free from abuse. We recognise our responsibility to protect and promote the welfare of adults and to foster a safeguarding culture across all operations.

All staff must adhere to this Policy, the relevant Codes of Conduct, and associated procedures. Anyone raising concerns about potential abuse in good faith will be supported, with confidentiality maintained and information shared only as necessary.

Key Elements of Our Safeguarding Procedures:

- Any behaviour perceived as poor practice or abuse must be reported to Castle management.
- The Castle will take reasonable steps to safeguard adults, even when not directly responsible for their care.
- Staff must follow safeguarding guidelines to minimise risks related to allegations of abuse or poor practice.
- All suspicions or allegations will be taken seriously and addressed promptly, fairly and confidentially.
- Adults at risk have their well-being prioritised, and their views respected unless overridden for safety reasons.

To implement this policy, The Castle Climbing Centre will ensure:

- Everyone involved is aware of safeguarding procedures and contacts for raising concerns.
- Concerns about an adult's safety are taken seriously, responded to promptly, and followed up in accordance with our safeguarding policy.
- Actions taken are proportionate, respect rights and dignity and are securely recorded in line with Data Protection requirements.
- Best practice advice, including guidance from relevant organisations such as UK Sport and NSPCC, is followed, with cooperation from police and authorities when needed.
- Information about individuals who pose a risk to adults is shared with the relevant authorities.
- All staff, board members, and volunteers understand their safeguarding responsibilities and receive up-to-date training.
- Safe recruitment processes assess suitability of staff and risk assessments are conducted for activities and events.
- A Designated Safeguarding Lead oversees actions, reviewed annually, alongside policy updates or changes in legislation.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Safeguarding Culture and Responsibility Across the Organisation

At The Castle, safeguarding is a shared responsibility. Everyone including board members, directors, leadership, management and staff, plays a vital role in fostering a strong safeguarding culture and ensuring the safety and well-being of children, young people and vulnerable adults. All individuals must understand and follow safeguarding policies and procedures, take an active role in promoting and protecting welfare, and contribute to creating a safe environment, whether or not they work directly with participants. The Castle

promotes this Policy and its guidance throughout the organisation, providing advice and support through the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Safeguarding concerns are addressed promptly, reported to statutory agencies when necessary, and all staff working with adults, young people and children at risk receive training to understand and uphold their responsibilities.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is the first point of contact for all safeguarding concerns at The Castle. They provide guidance on welfare and protection, promote best practices, and ensure reporting procedures are clearly communicated. The DSL maintains safeguarding records, manages suspected cases of abuse or poor practice, and helps create a safe, positive environment. They also oversee the recruitment, induction, role allocation, and professional development of instructors and coaches (with HR support), organise safeguarding training for all staff, and review policies and procedures annually to ensure compliance and awareness.

Instructors and Coaches are responsible for the safety and well-being of all climbers during their sessions. They must conduct a safety briefing before each activity to ensure all participants understand the associated risks and provide informed consent to take part.

The Duty Manager oversees the day-to-day operations of the centre and may be the first point of contact for addressing suspected abuse or poor practice if the Safeguarding Officer/Courses and Bookings Manager is unavailable.

The Operations Manager must be informed of any actual or suspected abuse or poor practice. They can step in to replace the DSL if unavailable or if the allegations concern them.

The Bookings Team manages both group and individual bookings, ensuring that all necessary information is collected from course participants.

Leadership's Commitment to Safeguarding: Board members, directors and senior leadership set the strategic direction for safeguarding and ensure policies are effectively implemented. Management must maintain safeguarding as a priority and ensure all staff, instructors, coaches and volunteers are trained and supported to meet their responsibilities.

ENTRY PROCEDURES

All climbers must register at Reception before climbing. Registration confirms their understanding that climbing carries risk of injury or death, that they accept responsibility for participation, and that they are either competent or properly supervised.

For Castle courses and sessions, instructors/coaches must sign in all participants using BETA or the group form before the session begins. Instructors/coaches are fully responsible for the safety and actions of their group during the session.

SAFEGUARDING ADULTS LEGISLATION

Adult safeguarding in England follows UN directives on the rights of disabled and older people and is governed by key legislation, including:

- **Human Rights Act 1998**
- **Data Protection Act 2018** and **GDPR 2018**
- **Care Act 2014** and associated statutory guidance
- **Mental Capacity Act 2005**

Additional laws cover abuse, neglect, exploitation and crimes such as murder, assault, sexual offences, domestic abuse, forced marriage, FGM, theft, fraud, modern slavery, hate crime and harassment. There are also provisions for barring unsuitable individuals from working with vulnerable adults and for offences against adults lacking capacity, including wilful neglect by carers.

Under the Care Act 2014, an “**Adult at Risk**” is someone aged 18+ who:

1. Has care and support needs (regardless of whether they are being met),
2. Is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect, and
3. Cannot protect themselves due to those needs.

Local Authorities are required to investigate suspected risks and coordinate protection, often involving Police, Health services and other agencies. Sporting organisations must also act, for example via disciplinary procedures, if a staff member or participant causes harm.

Abuse and Neglect

Abuse is a violation of an individual’s human and civil rights that causes harm or exploitation. It can occur in any relationship and may be intentional, negligent or due to ignorance. Under the **Care Act 2014**, abuse includes:

- Physical
- Sexual
- Emotional/Psychological/Mental
- Neglect and acts of Omission
- Financial or material abuse
- Discriminatory
- Organisational / Institutional
- Self-neglect
- Domestic Abuse (including coercive control)
- Modern slavery

Abuse can occur in many contexts, including domestic settings, institutions, forced marriage, human trafficking, sexual exploitation, radicalisation, hate crime, cyberbullying, scams and mate crime.

In sport, abuse can be perpetrated by staff, instructors, coaches, volunteers or participants, such as harassment, failing to meet participants’ needs, striking athletes or threats of harm. Outside sport, it may involve family, friends, professionals, or others in positions of trust or power.

WELLBEING PRINCIPLE

Success in sport relies on prioritising safety, wellbeing, and welfare, enabling participants to reach their potential. Wellbeing, central to UK legislation, includes mental and physical health, relationships, community ties, and societal contribution. A core aspect is living free from abuse and neglect. Safeguarding actions must be proportionate, considering overall wellbeing and avoiding unnecessary interventions.

PERSON-CENTERED SAFEGUARDING

Adults may make choices that involve some risk to their wellbeing, such as moving for a job or caring for a loved one. While we cannot make these decisions for them, we must understand their priorities and support them in protecting themselves.

Person-Centered Safeguarding engages individuals in decisions about their safety, respects their views, and enhances dignity and quality of life. Involvement improves outcomes, and advocates (trusted or professional) can provide additional support when needed.

THE PRINCIPLES OF ADULT SAFEGUARDING IN ENGLAND (CARE ACT 2014)

- **Empowerment** - People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.
- **Prevention** – It is better to take action before harm occurs.
- **Proportionality** – The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- **Protection** – Support and representation for those in greatest need.
- **Partnership** – Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse
- **Accountability** – Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding

MENTAL CAPACITY & DECISION MAKING

In the UK, individuals over 16 are presumed to have mental capacity unless proven otherwise. Capacity means understanding, remembering, weighing and communicating decisions, which can be affected by conditions like dementia, learning disabilities or illness.

Most adults can decide independently or with support, but some may lack capacity temporarily or permanently. **Mental capacity is crucial in safeguarding**, preventing someone from making decisions they can be abused. Adults may also be coerced or controlled, limiting their ability to make free choices. If abuse is suspected, it's essential to assess whether the adult can make informed decisions about their protection.

When someone cannot decide, actions must be in their best interests, minimise restrictions, and consider known preferences. Sports organisations may support decision-making via carers or family. If an at-risk individual lacks capacity, refer to the Local Authority. In emergencies, protective actions, including sharing information or removing the person from harm, may be necessary.

RECORDING AND INFORMATION SHARING

Sports organisations must comply with the **Data Protection Act (DPA) and GDPR**. Information about abuse is personal data and must be accurate, relevant, confidential and shared only with those who need to know.

Information can be shared with family or carers with the adult's consent, or if the adult lacks capacity and sharing is necessary for their safety. Consent can be overridden if there is a **risk to the adult or others, coercion or lack of capacity or to report/prevent a crime**.

Data protection ensures safe and appropriate information sharing within the organisation and with external bodies.

MULTI-AGENCY WORKING

While the Local Authority leads adult safeguarding, it often involves cooperation with various organizations, including sports bodies. Sports organisations may need to:

- Share information about concerns
- Offer a safe venue for meetings with professionals
- Attend safeguarding meetings
- Coordinate internal investigations with external agencies
- Share outcomes of internal investigations
- Ensure a safe environment for the adult's continued participation

THIRD PARTIES

Third parties using the centre, whether for climbing activities with adults and adults at risk or other activities (e.g., Babcock, Geckos, yoga, Pilates, personal training), must comply with this Policy, associated guidelines, and procedures, including reporting safeguarding concerns. They must also have a comprehensive and satisfactory Safeguarding Policy and Procedures in place.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Casual photography or filming by peers is allowed; all other photography or filming must be approved by The Castle. Images of climbers, including adults at risk, will not be used without consent.

For events like competitions, consent may be collected via registration forms or notices. All climbers can refuse to be photographed or filmed, and the Duty Manager, instructor, coach, or event organiser must ensure this right is respected.

RECRUITMENT, INDUCTION, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Instructors and Duty Managers undergo a thorough recruitment process, including interviews, two references, and verification of ID and qualifications, with copies kept on file. Staff working with children or adults at risk complete a DBS check at least every three years.

New recruits are observed during initial training and complete CSP induction, refreshed annually, with all training recorded by the Courses/Bookings Manager. Instructors and managers also receive annual performance appraisals.

DEPARTMENTAL STANDARDS

All staff members are required to adhere to the Castle CASP guidelines and follow the associated procedures. Additionally, the Castle has a Code of Conduct outlining the expected behaviour for all staff. Non-compliance with these expectations may result in disciplinary action.

SUPPORT

Castle staff have the right to:

- Be supported throughout an investigation into suspected abuse or poor practice, including access to professional support services;
- Access ongoing training and up-to-date information on managing activities for children and vulnerable adults;
- Receive support when reporting suspected abuse or poor practice;
- Be protected from abuse by children, youths, other adults, or parents;
- Work in a safe environment where they are not left vulnerable when supervising or working with children or vulnerable adults;
- Access clear channels for reporting concerns and be assured that their concerns will be taken seriously and handled confidentially

PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

The Castle has **Castle Safeguarding Procedures (CSP02)** and **Guidelines (CSPP03)** to conform to industry best practice as outlined by the British Mountaineering Council and NSPCC Children in Sport Unit.

REVIEW OF CASTLE ADULT SAFEGUARDING POLICY

The policy should be reviewed annually by the DSL for compliance with safeguarding regulations and best practices.

COMMUNICATION

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

CONTACT DETAILS FOR THE CASTLE

DSL: Iwona Kulczynska-Evans
Phone 020 8211 1068
Email iwona@castle-climbing.co.uk

Operations Manager: Viola Bonfanti
Email Viola.Bonfanti@castle-climbing.co.uk

HR Manager: Alejandra Diaz
Email Alejandra@castle-climbing.co.uk

USEFUL CONTACTS

Ann Craft Trust
<https://www.anncrafttrust.org/>
Phone 0115 951 5400
Email ann-craft-trust@nottingham.ac.uk

BMC Safeguarding Team

Phone 0161 438 3305

Email safeguarding@thebmc.co.uk

Police

Call 999 if:

- a serious offence is in progress or has just been committed
- someone is in immediate danger or harm
- property is in danger of being damaged
- a serious disruption to the public is likely

Call 101 for non-emergency enquiries.

Report anonymously to Crimestoppers:

<https://crimestoppers-uk.org/>

Phone 0800 555 111