

WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE CODE OF CONDUCT

Children and young people are able to play tennis because of the thousands of adults, both paid and unpaid, who provide opportunities for them to do so. All of these adults have special responsibilities to the children they work with. This code of conduct has been adopted by Helsby Tennis Club to provide clear guidance on the types of practice that will meet these responsibilities.

Good conduct not only prevents incidents and allegations, but also helps to highlight any conduct (by other people) that is unsafe or unprofessional. Those working with children in tennis should:

1. Be professional and maintain the highest standards of personal behaviour at all times
2. Recognise the trust placed in adults by children, and recognise the power held over children by adults. Treat this trust and this power with the highest responsibility
3. Try to work in an open and accountable manner.. Work in view of others wherever possible, be wary of working alone and unobserved, and be willing to accept questions or advice on good practice.
4. Expect others to work in an open and accountable manner. Share good practice and question others behaviour if necessary, working with the club welfare officer if applicable
5. Be mindful of the need to provide safe environments for all children, regardless of age, gender, disability, race, religion, ethnicity, social status or sexuality.
6. Remember that some children and particularly vulnerable and find it hard to ask for help or voice concerns.
7. Any form of sexual relationship or activity with a child is unacceptable and could lead to disciplinary or legal action.
8. Not be under the influence of drink, drugs or any substance.
9. Use appropriate and respectful forms of discipline and communication. Aggression, intimidation, verbal abuse, humiliation, or persistent shouting are unacceptable. Any form of physical assault will be regarded as a serious incident. If seen in others report immediately to the welfare officer
10. Use appropriate language. No swearing, blasphemy and never make sexual or suggestive comments to a child. If a child makes comments like these to an adult, be prepared to enforce these boundaries in your response.
11. Do not appear to favour one child or show interest in one child more than another
12. Do not discriminate against a child because of their age, gender, disability, culture, language, racial origin, religious belief or sexual identity
13. Ensure that young people of all abilities and backgrounds are included throughout the tennis programme. Where required coaches should adopt inclusive coaching methods consulting with the player or their parent/guardian where required where required
14. Use physical contact with players only where necessary. If contact is necessary (e.g. for purposes of coaching or first aid) then explain to the player what the contact is for and change your approach if they appear uncomfortable.
15. Design and use training methods and programmes which are appropriate for the player
16. Be aware of situations tht could be misunderstood or manipulated by other adults. E.g. if alone with a child in a clubhouse, changing room or car, he or she may be vulnerable to allocations of misconduct.
17. Be vigilant and aware of how actions can be misinterpreted by children.
 - a. Actions made with good intentions can seem intrusive or intimidating to some children
 - b. Some children may be attracted to the adults working with them
 - c. Adults should be conscious of the impact of their actions and should sensitively address any misunderstanding

If a concern about a child's welfare comes to your attention:

- Take seriously any suspicion or allegation of abuse, or any disclosure of concern made by a child.
- Listen carefully and calmly to the individual if they choose to discuss the issue and reassure them that they have done the right thing and what they have told you is very important
- Record information, including relevant details. Be sure to record opinions or feelings as such; do not record them as facts.
- Do NOT ask leading questions
- Do not question or interview the people involved in the incident of concern
- Do not promise confidentiality. Be honest and tell the child that you may need to pass on the concern.
- Report any concerns within the area of Child Protection (physical, emotional or sexual, neglect or bullying), in confidence and without delay, to the club welfare officer or abuse the LTA safeguarding team within 24 hours. If these cannot be contacted and there is an immediate risk, contact the Police or the local social services.
- Do not let doubt/personal bias prevent you from reporting the allegation
- Never discuss an allegation or suspicion with another person, (other than the Police or social services), unless advised to do so from your welfare officer or from the LTA Safeguarding Team.

Remember that it is the responsibility of all adults to safeguard children in sport. By recognising, following and discussing the principles behind this code, you are helping to make bad practice and abuse unwelcome in tennis.

Where this code has been breached, the LTA will always try to take action to address the situation, including formal child protection or disciplinary action where appropriate. We also encourage other organisations to do the same.

To contact the club welfare officer email welfare@helsbytennis.co.uk

To contact the LTA safeguarding team go to <https://www.lta.org.uk/about-us/safeguarding/> and follow the link. This page also gives further details on safeguarding in tennis.