



# Code of Practice for Working with Children and Young People

## Purpose

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 document comprises HORLEY LAWN TENNIS CLUB's (HLTC's, 'the Club') Code of Practice for those working with children and young people at or on behalf of HLTC; it provides clear guidance on the types of practice that will meet these responsibilities.

This Code of Practice complements, and should be read in conjunction with, HLTC's Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct for Members and Users. In this document the terms child or children and young person or young people are mutually inclusive.

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 at HLTC shall:

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 at all times. Work in view of others wherever possible, be wary of working alone and unobserved, and be willing to accept questions or criticism regarding good practice.
4. Expect others to work in an open and accountable manner. Question and criticise the practice of others if necessary.
5. Be mindful of the need to provide safe environments for all children, regardless of age, gender, gender identity, ability or disability, race, religion, faith or belief (including none), ethnicity, social status, sex or sexuality. Remember that some children are particularly vulnerable because of their identity and will find it hard to ask for help or to voice concerns.
6. Maintain a professional relationship with children. Any form of sexual relationship or activity with a child is unacceptable and could lead to disciplinary or legal action.
7. Not be under the influence of drink, drugs or any substance (others than those required for medical reasons).
8. Use appropriate and respectful forms of discipline and communication. Physical aggression, intimidation, verbal abuse or persistent shouting are unacceptable. Any form of assault (eg. hitting, kicking, pinching, slapping) will be regarded as a serious incident.
9. Use appropriate language. Don't swear, and never make sexual or suggestive comments to a child. If a child makes comments like these, be prepared to enforce these boundaries in your response.
10. Not appear to favour one child or show interest in one child more than another.
11. Not discriminate against a child because of their age, gender, gender identity, ability or disability, race, religion, faith or belief (including none), ethnicity, social status, sex or sexuality.
12. Use physical contact with players only where necessary. If contact is necessary, (eg for purposes of coaching or first-aid), then explain to the player what the contact is for, and change your approach if he or she appears uncomfortable.
13. Design and use training methods and training programmes which are appropriate to the individual player.

14. Be aware of situations that could be misunderstood or manipulated by other adults. For example, if a coach or official is alone with a child in a clubhouse, changing room or car, he or she may be vulnerable to allegations of misconduct.
15. Be vigilant and aware of how actions can be misinterpreted by children. Remember:
  - 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 aware of the impact of their actions, and should sensitively address any misunderstanding.

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

16. Take seriously any suspicion or allegation of abuse, or any disclosure of concern made by a child.
17. Record information, including relevant details. Be sure to record opinions or feelings as such; do not record them as facts. Do not question or interview the people involved in the incident of concern.
18. Do not promise confidentiality. Be honest and tell the child that you may need to pass on the concern.
19. Report any concerns within the area of Safeguarding (physical, emotional or sexual abuse, neglect or bullying), in confidence and without delay, to HLTC's Welfare Officer (WO - name and contact details on the poster in the HLTC clubhouse entrance hallway). If he/she cannot be contacted and there is an immediate risk, contact the Police or the local social services (contact details are in the Safeguarding Policy document).
20. Never discuss an allegation or suspicion with another person (other than the Police or social services), before receiving advice from HLTC's WO.

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.

**Breaches of this Code**

HLTC will investigate alleged breaches of this Code in accordance with its Complaints Procedure.

**Approval**

This policy update was approved by the H