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# British Mountaineering Council

## Child Protection & Vulnerable Adults Policy and Guidelines



SERVING CLIMBERS, HILLWALKERS & MOUNTAINEERS

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## **Introduction**

The BMC is in the enviable position of being supported by a large and enthusiastic network of volunteers who enable it to develop climbing amongst young people. Without this valuable help hundreds of young people would not be able to receive experienced and trusted guidance.

Awareness of the potential problems that can arise from young people being in contact with those who would try to harm them has increased greatly over the past 30 years. This has resulted in organisations that take responsibility for young people, both on a voluntary and professional basis, having to review their operating procedures. This has enabled them to provide support and guidance to adults working with young people.

The BMC believes that child welfare is the responsibility of everyone. Unfortunately forms of abuse can occur anywhere where children are.

All responsible organisations involved in working with young people need a Child Protection Policy (CPP). It is designed to both protect young people and support those who look after them. This document gives clear guidance on the identification and procedures for dealing with both potential and actual child abuse. It should also act as a guide in helping volunteers and BMC staff create a safe environment for young people and protect themselves against allegations of improper behaviour. The BMC believes that both these points are very important and it is against this backdrop that this document has been produced. It is mandatory for all BMC staff and volunteers working with young people to comply with this policy and guidelines. These guidelines should enhance what is already a highly valuable service.

## **Policy Statement**

The BMC recognises that all children have the right to be protected from harm and live in a safe environment.

The BMC has a duty of care to safeguard all children involved in BMC activities from harm. All children have the right to protection and the needs of children from all backgrounds and abilities must be taken into account. The BMC will ensure the safety and protection of all children involved in its activities through adherence to its Child Protection Policy and procedures.

The BMC will support anyone who, in good faith, reports his or her concerns that a child is at risk of, or may actually be, being abused.

## **Principles**

The following principles underpin the BMC Child Protection Policy:

- To provide children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care and responsibility of the BMC.
- To allow all staff/volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.
- All suspicions of child abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- A child is defined as an individual under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989).
- To help and support all individuals involved in providing activities for young people on behalf of the BMC.
- To give guidance and support, when required, to all organisations and individuals involved in providing climbing and mountaineering activities for young people.
- That all children, regardless of ethnic origin or disability, have the right to live in a safe environment.
- That the welfare of the child is paramount and will underpin all guidance.
- This guidance is mandatory for all staff and volunteers.

## Recognising How Children Can Be Harmed

'Child abuse' is a term used to describe ways in which children are harmed. Abuse may result from action or inaction by a volunteer or paid helper, family member or another young person. The Children Act (1989) states that there are four main types of abuse: Physical, Emotional, Sexual and Neglect. These are outlined below.

### Physical Abuse

Where adults physically hurt or injure children. In a climbing/mountaineering situation this might occur if the child is forced to train or climb beyond his or her capabilities. It may also occur if the training disregards the capacities of the child's immature and growing body. In more extreme cases this can take the form of physical attack i.e. hitting, shaking, burning or biting them.

### Emotional Abuse

Occurs when a child is not given love, help and encouragement and is constantly derided or ridiculed. It can occur, conversely, if a child is over protected preventing them from socializing. In a sporting/climbing context this may be present in the unrealistic expectations of what a child can achieve by parents, coaches or even fellow climbers. This can also occur in the undermining of a young person through ridicule. This abuse often manifests itself in the form of bullying (See section "Action to Prevent Bullying" page 8).

### Sexual Abuse

Occurs when a child knowingly or unknowingly takes part in an activity which meets the sexual needs of the adult person or persons involved. It could range from sexually suggestive comments to physical sexual activities. Exposing young people to pornography is also a form of sexual abuse. In a sporting context this may take the form of photography or videoing for the sexual gratification of the viewer. Coaches and volunteers are often placed in a position of great trust and it is when this trust is abused that sexual abuse can occur. (See section "[Guidelines for the Use of Photography](#)").

### Neglect

This includes situations in which adults fail to meet a child's basic physical needs (e.g. food, warm clothing). This may involve the lack of medical attention or consistently leaving children alone and unsupervised or monitored. Neglect can also occur if a supervisor fails to ensure children are safe or exposes them to undue cold or risk of injury. This has obvious implications for those taking young people into potentially hostile mountain environments.

Abuse in all its forms can affect a child at any age. The effects can be so damaging that if not treated they may follow an individual into adulthood. For example an adult who has been abused may find it difficult to maintain a stable and trusting relationship. **The BMC will support anyone who in good faith reports his or her concerns that a child is at risk.**

## Possible Signs of Abuse

Even for those experienced at working with child abuse it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already occurred. The BMC acknowledges that its staff and volunteers are **not necessarily experts** at such recognition. The BMC therefore expects them to discuss any concern they may have with regards to the welfare of a child immediately with the person in charge (see section "[What You Should Do Next](#)"). If this is not practical and the situation is deemed to be too serious to delay then advice can be sought from Social Services or the police.

Below are listed some of the characteristics which may be evidence of abuse. These are by no means exhaustive and are only indicators of potential abuse, **not** confirmation.

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to injury.
- An injury of which the explanation seems inconsistent.
- The child describes what appears to be an abusive act involving them.
- Unexplained behaviour changes e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn, or displaying sudden outbursts of temper.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness.
- Distrustful of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
- Difficulty making friends.
- A child being prevented from socialising with other children.
- Displaying variation in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite.
- Becoming increasingly unkempt or dirty.

It must be recognised that the presence of one or more of these indicators is not proof that actual abuse is taking place. **It is not** the responsibility of those involved in BMC activities to decide whether child abuse is occurring **but it is their responsibility to act upon any concerns** (see section "[What You Should Do Next](#)").

## Raising Awareness

It is understandable that people who are well motivated, caring individuals with a commitment to climbing and mountaineering, are reluctant to believe that children may be suffering harm in a climbing environment or at home. It may be difficult to accept that children could be at risk because of the way an organisation or its events are run.

Levels of awareness need to be raised without creating an atmosphere of anxiety or suspicion. However a basic principle should be:

**If you become aware of anything which causes you to feel uncomfortable, you should speak to either a club youth officer, area youth co-ordinator or the BMC Officer responsible for Youth . In the event of the BMC not having a designated Officer responsible for Youth then you should find out who the designated Child Welfare Officer is and speak to him or her.**

This means being aware of attitudes of staff and volunteers and of the interactions between them. Certain modes of behaviour may be excused by comments such as:

“He/She is always like that”

or

“We have just come to expect that from him/her but what can you do?”

If the behaviour gives rise to concern or is directly contrary to accepted good practice then some type of action must be taken.

Adults should also seek to help and support each other in avoiding situations of bad practice. This is achievable the more open and co-operative a working environment is.

If a young person behaves in a way that gives rise to concern then this may be an indicator of a problem. There may well be a perfectly acceptable explanation for this behaviour. It is however important to act on a concern and ascertain that this is the case. If it is still felt there may be a problem it is important to seek further help.

## **What is Bullying?**

Bullying is one of the most common forms of abuse. It would not be too unrealistic to conclude that most people have been a victim of bullying in some form at one time or another. For some children bullying can be taken to the extreme and can make their lives intolerable. Bullying is something that needs to be taken very seriously. It is not acceptable for adults to dismiss bullying as a simple part of growing up. There is sufficient evidence to show that the consequences of bullying can be devastating both to the victim and their family.

There are three main types of bullying:

- Physical, e.g. hitting, kicking or theft
- Verbal, e.g. racist or homophobic remarks
- Emotional, e.g. persistent negative feedback

All these will include:

- Deliberate hostility and aggression towards the victim
- A victim who is weaker and less powerful than the bully or bullies
- An outcome which is always painful and distressing for the victims

Bullying behaviour may include:

- Other forms of violence
- Sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing
- Torment, ridicule, humiliation
- Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Unwanted physical contact or abusive, offensive comments of a sexual nature

Within climbing there are potential situations where bullying can take place:

- A parent who pushes too hard
- A coach who adopts a “win at all cost” philosophy
- A climber who intimidates others
- Unwanted peer pressure from other climbers to do routes that are too hard or dangerous

It is important that all those involved in BMC activities are aware of the BMC’s anti-bullying policy which follows below, and it is mandatory for them to adhere to this.

## **BMC Anti-Bullying Policy**

Bullying can take many forms and is usually repeated over a period of time. The three main types of bullying are: physical, verbal and emotional, all these forms of bullying include:

- Deliberate hostility and aggression towards the victim.
- A victim who is weaker than the bully.
- An outcome that is painful and distressing to the victim.

Bullying behaviour may include:

- Other forms of violence.



- Tormenting, ridiculing, humiliation.
- Racial abuse.
- Unwanted physical contact or abusive or offensive comments of a physical nature.

In a climbing context emotional bullying is most likely to be found rather than physical violence. This is often difficult to define or prove, it is important that all those involved in BMC activities subscribe to and accept this policy. All involved should be prepared to:

- Take all signs of bullying very seriously.
- Encourage all children to speak and share their concerns. (It is believed that up to 12 children per year commit suicide as a result of bullying, so if anyone talks about or threatens suicide, seek professional help immediately). Help the victim to speak out and tell the person in charge or someone in authority. Create an open environment.
- Investigate all allegations and take action to ensure the victim is safe. Speak with the victim and the bully(ies) separately.
- Reassure the victim that you can be trusted and will help them, but do not promise that you will not tell anyone else.
- Keep records of what is said (e.g. what happened, by whom, when).
- Report any concerns to the appropriate person in charge and ensure that the BMC Officer responsible for Youth is informed.

### **Possible actions toward the bullies:**

- Talk with the bully(ies), explain the situation, and try to get the bully(ies) to understand the consequences of their behaviour. Seek an apology to the victim(s).
- Inform the bully's parents.
- Insist on the return of any borrowed items and seek to establish how the victim is to be compensated for any damage caused.
- Provide support for the coach of the victim.
- Impose sanctions as necessary.
- Encourage and support the bully(ies) to change behaviour.
- Hold meetings with the families to report on progress.

## How to Respond to a Disclosure, Suspicion or Allegation

***“ If there is a concern about a child’s welfare, or the behaviour of an adult the one thing not to do is do nothing”***

Child Protection (policy and guidelines) MCofl 2003

A child in your care may indicate to you that they are being abused in some way or information may come to you of possible abuse. On receiving this information you should;

- React calmly- do not rush into inappropriate action. What you are told may be very shocking but it is important you give the child some stability;
- Reassure the child that they are not to blame and that they did the right thing to tell someone, i.e. you, about the incident;
- Take the child seriously and listen carefully to them. Recognise how difficult it was for them to tell you;
- Only ask questions which help to clarify the situation. Do not question any more than is strictly necessary. The law is very strict when it suspects a child has been led or ideas have been suggested;
- If possible allow only one adult to talk to the child to begin with. It is possible that discrepancies in the account of what has happened can, in the event of the allegation being referred, lead to legal complications later;
- Try not to make the child repeat their account unnecessarily;
- Do not make promises you cannot keep. Explain that you may have to tell other people in order to stop what is happening but that you will endeavour to keep the incident as confidential as possible;
- Make a full record of what has been said, heard or seen as soon as possible.

Do Not:

- Take sole responsibility for further action (**see section “[What You Should Do Next](#)”**)
- Approach or try to contact the alleged abuser
- Ignore what has happened
- Make promises you cannot keep

## Recording information

Information that is passed on to the BMC, Social Services and police must be as helpful as possible. Hence there is a necessity for making as detailed record as possible. This should endeavour to contain:

- The nature of the incident;
- A description of any visible injuries;
- The child's account;
- Times, dates or other relevant information;
- A clear distinction between what is fact, hearsay and opinion;
- A record using the [BMC's Child Protection Incident form](#) (see Appendix).

After attaining this information do not hesitate to pass it on to the relevant organisation (see flow charts in the "[What You Should Do Next](#)" section).

## Allegations of previous abuse

Allegations of abuse may be made a long time after the event (e.g. by an adult who was abused as a child or by a member of staff who is still currently working with children). Where such an allegation is made the procedures in section "[What You Should Do Next](#)" should be followed and when appropriate Social Services or the police will be informed. This is important as children may still be at risk from the accused individual should the allegation be proved to be correct.

## What You Should Do Next

### Concerns about poor practice and possible abuse within a BMC setting

This relates to all those involved within BMC activities.

Concerns and allegations about child abuse require very careful handling and should be treated with the strictest confidence. Any form of abuse can ultimately result in a criminal conviction. It is important to keep an open mind and that all allegations are kept in the strictest practical confidence. It is important you act on your concerns.

If the concern is clearly about poor practice see the “[Poor Practice](#)” section.

If the concern/allegation is suspected abuse and relates to a BMC volunteer, official or member of staff it should be reported to the BMC Chief Executive and the BMC Officer responsible for Youth who may in turn refer it to Social Services or the Police. Concerns over members of the public may be referred directly to Social Services.

In all cases the BMC Officer responsible for Youth and Chief Executive should be informed. If the allegation is against one of these two people then the report should be given to the officer not involved.

**Following advice from Social Services** the parents or carers of the child will be informed by the BMC President or Chief Executive. Where there is concern for the safety of the child Social Services or the Police will contact the child's parents. Where there is an allegation against a parent the police or Social Services will contact the family.

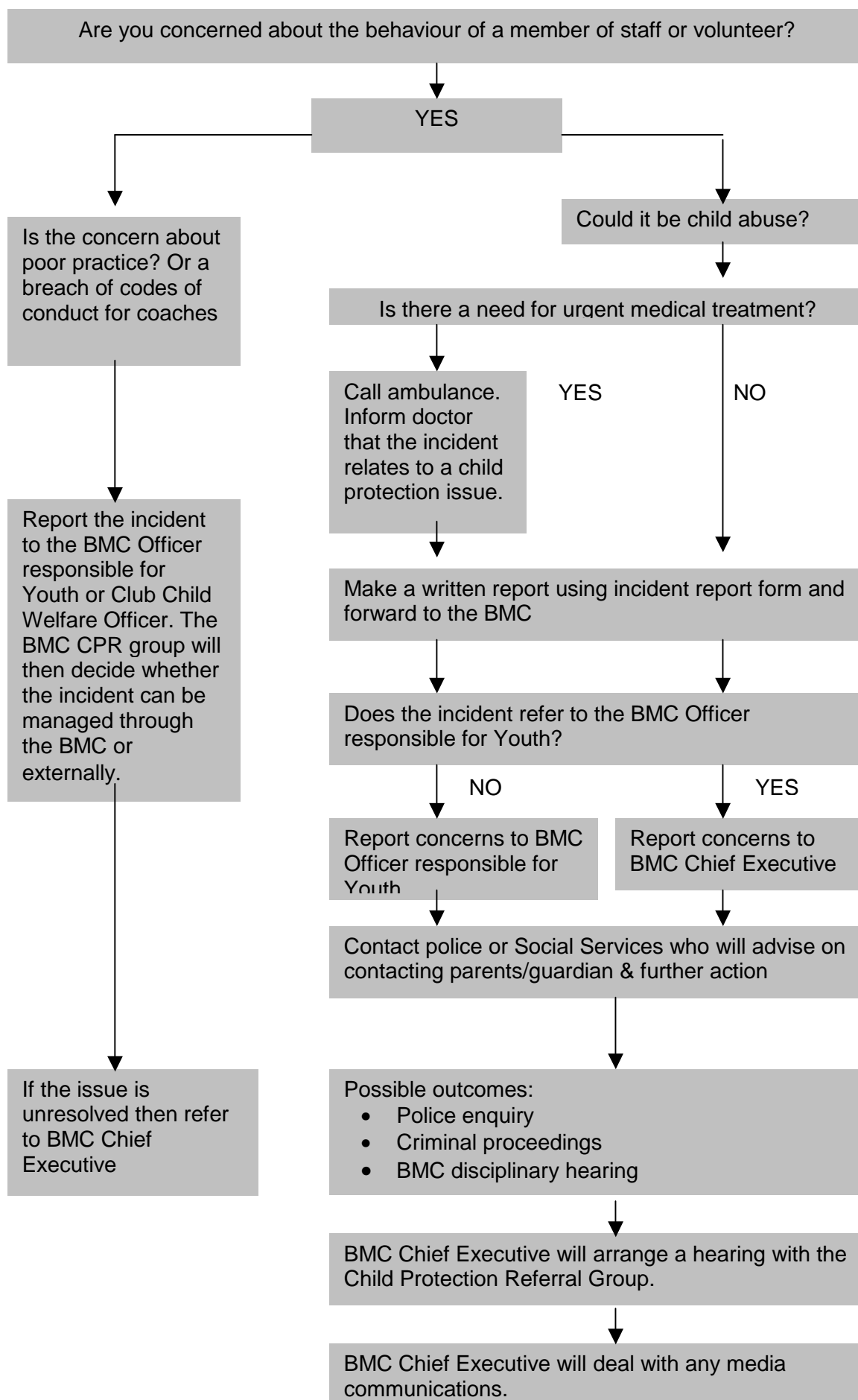
The member of staff or volunteer will then be notified that an allegation has been made and where appropriate suspended from his/her duties.

**If you are in any doubt or do not feel confident in sharing your concerns with a senior colleague you should seek advice from Police and Social Services.**

**Alternatively you can contact the NSPCC 24hr help line on 0800 800 500.**

Depending on the course of action decided upon by the BMC, and after consulting with professional child care services, the flow chart overleaf sets out what will occur.

## Dealing with concerns, disclosure or allegations about BMC staff, coaches or volunteers



## Concerns about abuse outside a BMC setting

If this happens you should ensure the safety of the young person. If he or she requires immediate attention call an ambulance, inform a doctor of your concerns and ensure that they are aware that this is a child protection issue.

BMC procedures should then be followed (**please see the flow chart on the next page**). You should refer your concerns to the BMC Officer responsible for Youth.

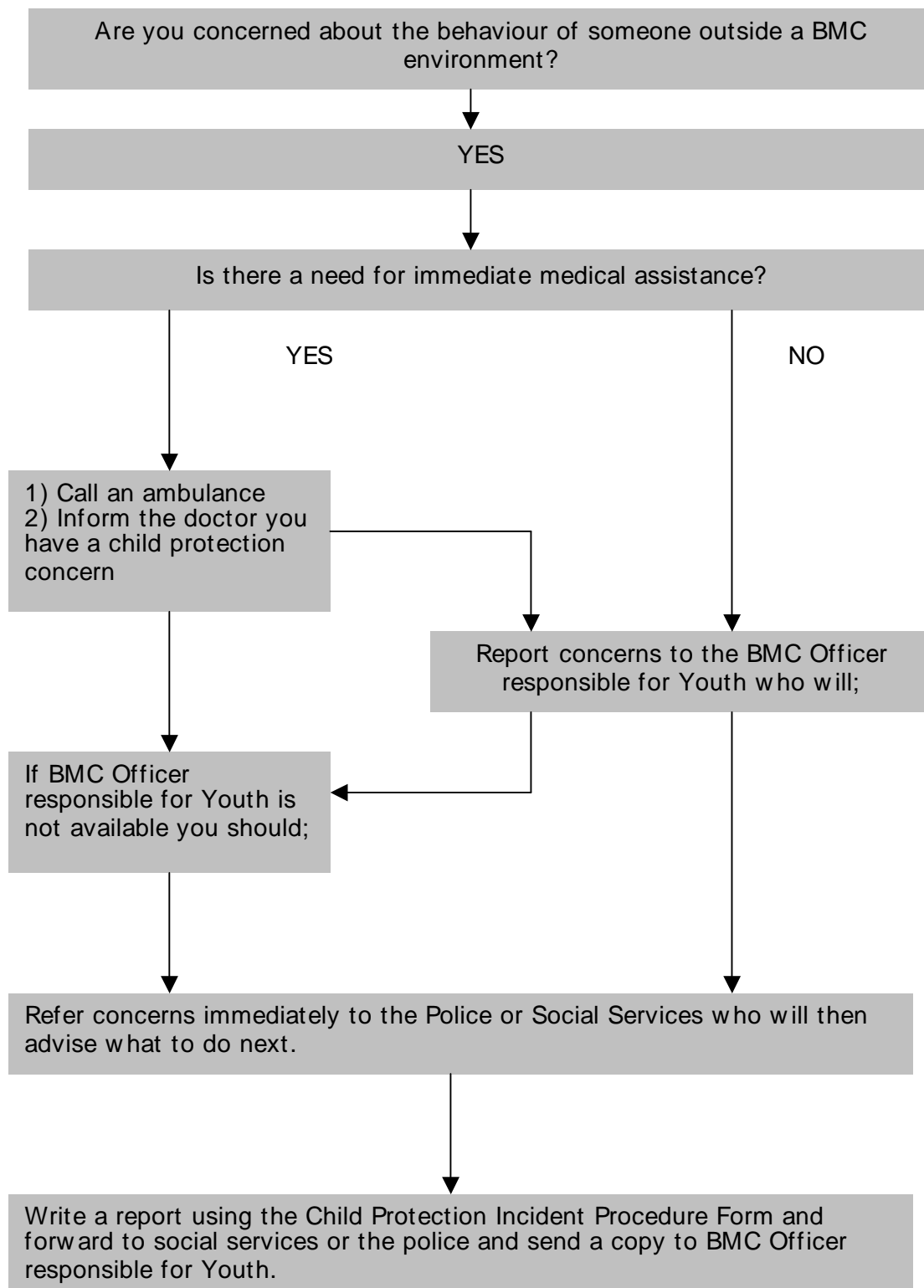
If a formal referral is made make it clear that it is a child protection issue. All police forces have a specialised Child Protection Unit which deals with allegations of abuse within the family and by people in positions of trust. In a real emergency, or if completely unsure as to what to do, phone 999.

Parents/carers should only be contacted **after** advice from Social Services.

In all cases it is important that the welfare of the child is paramount and that it can be especially difficult for children from an ethnic minority or who are disabled to disclose abuse to others. Adults should be especially vigilant with these groups and be aware that their own prejudices may block them from believing these groups. It is important to give thought as to how adults respond in these situations.

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT EVERY EFFORT IS MADE TO MAINTAIN CONFIDENTIALITY.

## Dealing with possible abuse occurring outside a BMC setting



## Internal Enquiries and Suspension

In the event of the BMC being informed of an allegation of poor practice, bullying or abuse against a person involved in BMC activities the Chief Executive will arrange a meeting of the Child Protection Referral Group (CPRG). This group will decide which of these categories the incident falls within and what action is to be taken. The person accused may be asked to stand down pending the outcome of any investigation by the statutory authorities. It should be made clear to this person that this is only a precautionary measure and will not prejudice any later disciplinary procedure.

Irrespective of the findings of any criminal and child protection enquiries, a disciplinary sub committee of the Child Protection Referral Group will assess all individual cases to decide whether a volunteer or member of staff will be reinstated and how this can be handled.

This may be a difficult decision, particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. The disciplinary sub committee will need to base its decision on the facts of the case and the findings of any investigation by the Social Services department and where applicable the outcome of a prosecution by the Police. It is important that the BMC is seen to provide support to an individual where an accusation of abuse has been shown to be false. In cases where there is insufficient evidence for prosecution the sub committee may consider that on the balance of probability an incident has occurred. Nevertheless the sub committee must attend to the facts as reported by the investigating authority and their reasons for not taking the matter further. The responsibility of the disciplinary sub committee is to agree the best way forward and to carry out whatever disciplinary measures they consider to be appropriate. In this they will have to regard the welfare of the young person/s above all else.

The Child Protection Referral Group will include the BMC Chief Executive, the BMC Officer responsible for Youth, members of the Executive Committee, an independent outside advisor from Social Services and selected BMC members with specialised knowledge.

### What happens if you are accused of an abusive action

In the event of an accusation:

- Make notes of all your actions/contacts with the child in question as soon as possible.
- Seek access to professional and legal advice.
- Ensure that you are no longer working with the child/children making the allegation
- Follow the procedures laid out in this and supporting documents.
- Accept that colleagues may not be in a position to discuss the matter with you while the investigation is underway.
- Accept that you may be suspended from working with any young people.



Such events are difficult for all concerned. The BMC will do its utmost to remain impartial in all matters relating to an accusation. The main concern with any incident is the child's welfare. For an individual, against whom an allegation has been made this will be a difficult time. There are no easy ways to deal with such a situation, it is important that you seek help and support.

## Poor Practice

Poor practice constitutes anything that is contradictory to the BMC Child Protection Policy document, the BMC equity policy or any of the guidance outlined in supporting BMC documentation. Poor practice may also be a failure to follow event guidelines, so putting children in danger, or emergency procedures where an accident has occurred or is deemed likely to occur in the future. A combination of minor incidents could also be regarded as poor practice.

If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice by a volunteer, parent or member of staff, the BMC Officer responsible for Youth, BMC Event Co-ordinator, Area Youth Co-ordinator or Team Manager will deal with it as a misconduct issue.

If the allegation is about poor practice by the BMC Officer responsible for Youth, BMC event co-ordinator, senior volunteer, national team official, Area Youth Co-ordinator or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to the relevant BMC Officer and/or the BMC Chief Executive who will decide how to deal with the allegation and whether or not to initiate disciplinary proceedings.

A Child Protection Incident Form (CPIF) should be completed and a copy sent to the relevant BMC Officer.

If necessary, the BMC will refer the matter to the BMC Child Protection Referral Group.

Please also refer to the [BMC Procedures for Dealing with Poor Practice \(Appendix 3\)](#).

## Good Practice

BMC volunteers and staff, particularly those involved in climbing activities, will be working in an environment where a “hands on approach” may sometimes be necessary. Ensure that such contact is kept to the safe minimum, done openly, in response to the child’s needs, and is within the knowledge and consent of the child and their parent. There may, in extreme circumstances, be situations where reasonable force may be used as restraint i.e. self-defence, preventing risk or injury or damage to property. Please record any such incident and report it to the BMC Officer responsible for Youth or the BMC Chief Executive.

Below are outlined guidelines, ideas and suggestions that help to create a safe environment for children. They should also help in ensuring that a child or others do not misinterpret the behaviour of adults. In the first section the BMC’s responsibilities and the responsibilities of any club directly involved with working with young people are outlined.

### Good practice procedures

The BMC is responsible for its CPP policy and implementation. Individual clubs who are involved with young people are required to work within this guidance. They are also encouraged to produce their own guidance and ensure that all members are aware of procedures and guidelines for good practice.

The BMC Officer responsible for Youth will act as the National Child Welfare Officer. The BMC recommends that every club involved with young people should have a designated Youth Officer. This person should ensure that the club is familiar with BMC and current guidance. The AYC's will also act as Area Child Welfare Officers.

The BMC will publicise its child protection guidelines to show its commitment to providing a safe environment for young people.

Clubs are advised to follow BMC procedures in the event of an incident.

The BMC will provide guidance and training for adults who work with young people.

Parents should be clear what the BMC or a club are doing and that the activities are being run in relation to accepted good practice.

All adults who work with young people on a regular basis should be CRB checked.

The BMC and clubs will ensure that its guidelines on the use of photography are adhered to.

The BMC and clubs will develop and promote their anti-bullying policy.

The BMC will monitor coaches and provide them with feedback with respect to good practice guidelines.

### **Good practice for adults working with young climbers**

- Staff and volunteers must respect the rights, dignity and worth of all. They must also treat everyone with equality.
- Climbing coaches and supervisors should ensure that the welfare of any young climber is paramount and that the activity should be fun.
- They should think about:
  - I. Not over-climbing, or over-training, young climbers.
  - II. Young people climb because they enjoy it. Remember winning a competition may be only part of that enjoyment.
  - III. Motivate young people through positive feedback and constructive criticism.
  - IV. Ensure young climbers climb in an environment where inherent risk is kept to a minimum and is within accepted guidelines.
  - V. Never allow young climbers to climb when injured.
  - VI. Ensure all equipment is appropriate and in good condition.
- It is important when supervising young people to avoid situations where an adult and an individual child are completely unobserved e.g. when climbing at a crag on a youth meet.
- If physical support is required e.g. spotting, support when bouldering, ensure the individual is aware of what is happening and has consented to this physical help. Some parents /carers are becoming increasingly sensitive about this type of help and their views should be respected at all times.
- When supervising young people in a changing area adults should ideally work in pairs. Always check before entering a changing area that everyone is decent. Ideally parents should take responsibility for their own child in these situations.

- Encourage an open environment, always explain why you are doing something and try to facilitate, as far as is practical, an open and inclusive approach to BMC activities. People often respond better if they feel they are part of the process.
- When there is a mixed youth meet, event, or trip ensure there is at least one male and one female helper.

The following should only be sanctioned in an emergency situation and then only if a member of BMC staff has been consulted and has agreed:

- Taking young people alone on car journeys.
- Spending time alone with a young person who is not a direct relation or guardian.

The following must never be sanctioned:

- Taking young people alone to your home
- Sharing a room with a young person or young people.
- Allowing young people to engage in the use of inappropriate language.
- Making sexually suggestive comments to a young person even in fun.
- Doing things of a personal nature for a young person they can do themselves.
- Allowing allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, not acted upon or not recorded.
- Allowing young people to consume alcohol or take illegal recreational drugs.
- Allowing any physically rough or sexually provocative, contact or games.

## **Positions of trust**

**All adults who work with young people are in a position of trust which has been invested in them by the parents and the young person. This relationship can be described as one in which the adult is in a position of power and influence by virtue of their role. In climbing most adults recognise that there are certain boundaries in the coach/climber relationship which must not be crossed. The relationship is no different to school teacher and pupil.**

## Recruitment of Staff and Volunteers

The BMC highly values all the work its staff and volunteers do with young people. As part of the recruitment process it is important that all those concerned with this work are confident that recruitment procedures are as comprehensive as possible. The vetting of individuals to varying degrees is a necessary part of the recruitment process. This procedure in no way reflects any element of distrust about a possible volunteer, it is merely a procedure that all individuals must go through.

To ensure individuals go through the correct vetting procedures the following guidelines are to be used:

### **Unsupervised access:**

Those people who have regular and/or low ratio access to young people:

- All BMC staff involved in youth activities
- All youth team coaches and regular support team
- All voluntary individuals with a direct involvement with residential trips
- All voluntary individuals with a direct role on outdoor youth meets.

Due to the amount of responsibility that is involved with unsupervised access the Chief Executive or Youth Officer will decide upon the level of vetting for all individuals not included in the above list.

Those who are considered to have *unsupervised* access must complete the following procedure:

- Go through a CRB check.
- Fill in a Youth Volunteer Registration form (see Appendix).
- Be approved by the BMC Chief Executive or BMC Officer responsible for Youth to work on BMC supported activities.

### **Supervised access:**

All people involved with youth activities on an occasional basis, and where it is anticipated the access will be in an open supervised environment, e.g. "one off" competition, helpers must:

- Complete a BMC volunteer registration form.
- Be approved by the BMC representative for the activity.

However, if working on a regular basis with young people they must go through the CRB check process.

## **Guidelines for the Use of Photography**

It is not the intention of this document to prevent the use of video or photography equipment. Video used in an appropriate way is a valuable coaching aid and family photographs of young people are part and parcel of many family lives. Climbing photography has done much to promote the sport amongst young people and this is an important part of the BMC's work. However there is evidence that some people have used sporting events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young and disabled sports people in vulnerable positions. It is advisable that all individuals be vigilant with any concerns to be reported to the BMC representative or responsible person at an event.

The BMC event co-ordinator or organiser will brief media on the range of acceptable activities when filming to cause the least disruption to any child competing or climbing on a youth meet.

### **Photographers briefing**

- 1) If you are commissioning professional photographers or inviting the press to an activity or event it is important to ensure they are clear about your expectations of them in relation to child protection.
- 2) Ensure all individuals involved are aware of what is appropriate in terms of content and behaviour.
- 3) The BMC event co-ordinator or organiser must ensure they are aware of all individuals taking photographs. They may decide, in the interests of safety, to insist all official photographers wear identification.
- 4) As part of the event information sheet all participants and parents should be informed if there is to be a photographer present. Parents should also be given the opportunity to object if they do not wish images of their child to be used.
- 5) Inform athletes and parents that a photographer will be in attendance at an event and ensure they consent to both the taking and publication of films or photographs.
- 6) Event co-ordinators and organisers should not allow unsupervised access to young climbers or one to one photo sessions at events.
- 7) If a photo shoot is arranged outside a BMC event but is in any way connected to BMC activities, or photographs are to be used within BMC literature, then the child's parents must be informed by the BMC.
- 8) Avoid the use of the first name and surname of individuals in a photograph. This reduces the risk of inappropriate, unsolicited attention from people outside the sport. An easy rule to remember is:
- 9) If the climber is named, avoid using their photograph.
- 10) If the photograph is used, avoid naming the climber/participant. In situations where it is necessary for climbers to be named ensure there is permission from both the climber and parents.
- 11) Ask for parental permission to use an image of a young person. This ensures that parents are aware of the way the image of their child is used to represent the sport.

12) Ask for climber's permission to use his or her image. This ensures that they are aware of the way the image of themselves is to be used to representing the sport.

13) Create a recognised procedure for reporting the use of inappropriate images to reduce the risks to athletes.

14) Current BMC guidance allows children to be named in some publications and events. Individual briefings will be given. It is important that contact details for the young person with a name or photograph are NOT given.

**Videoing as a coaching aid:** there is no intention to prevent club coaches and teachers using video equipment as a legitimate coaching aid. However, young climbers and their parents/carers should be aware that this is part of the coaching programme and care should be taken in the storing of such films.

At BMC events that are open to the general public where young people are climbing the following guidelines should be used:

"No unauthorised photography" signs should be erected informing people that anyone wishing to take photography should register their intentions with the BMC representative.

# APPENDIX 1

## Useful Contacts

The BMC Officer  
responsible for Youth  
0870 0104878

The BMC Chief Executive.  
Dave Turnbull  
0870 0104878

The NSPCC help line  
Tel 0808 800 5000

Asian Helpline:0800 096 7719

Welsh Helpline:0800 100 2524

[www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

Child Protection in Sport Unit  
0116 234 7278  
[www.thecpsu.org.uk](http://www.thecpsu.org.uk)

## Useful Websites

[www.thebmc.co.uk](http://www.thebmc.co.uk)

[www.disclosure.gov.uk](http://www.disclosure.gov.uk)

[www.sportscoachuk.org](http://www.sportscoachuk.org)



## APPENDIX 2

The BMC does not have a formal coaching qualification structure but does support the leader qualification structure operated by MLTUK. The BMC recognises the need for proof of technical competence with respect to coaching. The BMC uses personal competence and experience as a measure of coaching competence.

### Good Coaching Practice – Key Principles

Reproduced from the *Code of Conduct for Sports Coaches* (**sports coach UK**, 2001) with kind permission of **sports coach UK (scUK)**. All rights reserved. **scUK** subscription and membership services provide a range of benefits to coaches including insurance and information services. For further details, please ring 0113-274 4802 or visit [www.sportcoachuk.org](http://www.sportcoachuk.org)

#### Rights

Coaches must respect and champion the rights of every individual to participate in sport.

#### Relationships

Coaches must develop a relationship with athletes (and others) based on openness, honesty, mutual trust and respect.

#### Responsibilities – personal standards

Coaches must demonstrate proper personal behaviour and conduct at all times.

#### Responsibilities – professional standards

To maximise benefits and minimise the risks to athletes, coaches must attain a high level of competence through qualifications and a commitment to ongoing training that ensures safe and correct practice.

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **BMC Procedures for Dealing with Poor Practice**

1. Once an incident has been reported to either the BMC Officer responsible for Youth or BMC Chief Executive he or she will, in turn, pass it onto the Child Protection Referral Group to decide if the incident relates to abuse or bad practice. If the incident is identified as abuse then it will immediately be handed onto the statutory bodies;
2. If it is decided the incident relates to bad practice then after consultation with the Executive Committee then a decision will be made whether or not to suspend, temporarily the person accused;
3. A disciplinary hearing will be called. The disciplinary committee will consist of:
  - An independent person.
  - A senior officer of the BMC.
  - Technical experts.
4. The accused will be advised of the receipt of a report;
5. The accused will be invited to a hearing which will be held at a convenient time for them;
6. The accused must be given sufficient advanced warning of a hearing;
7. The accused must be given opportunity to offer their explanation of the incident;
8. Once the panel has made its decision it must relate this to the accused in writing as soon as possible.
9. A copy of the finding should be held by the BMC.

The power of the disciplinary committee:

1. Temporary suspension.
2. Person may only work with young people when supervised.
3. Person must undergo some form of training.

# BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

177-179 Burton Road  
Manchester M20 2BB

Tel: 0161 445 6111  
Fax: 0161 445 4500

## BMC CHILD PROTECTION INCIDENT FORM

For detailed questions, use a separate sheet if necessary

EVENT DETAILS	
Name of event	
Date of event	
Co-ordinator	
YOUR DETAILS	
Name	
Your position	
Contact tel	
CHILD'S DETAILS	
Name	
Address (inc. post code)	
Tel	
Date of Birth	
PARENTAL/GUARDIAN DETAILS	
Name(s)	
Address (inc. post code)	
Tel (if different to above)	
WITNESS DETAILS	
Name (1)	
Address (inc. post code)	
Tel	
Name (2)	
Address (inc. post code)	
Tel	

INCIDENT DETAILS	
Date and time of incident	
Your observations (i.e. what is the nature of the allegation (including dates, times and any special factors or other relevant information (make clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay). Describe any visible bruising or other injuries, behavioural signs or indirect signs. Use additional sheets.	
The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred (remember, do not lead the child – record actual details.) use additional sheets.	
Actions taken so far (including whether anyone else has been contacted and if so who?)	
Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
If yes give name:	
OTHER PROFESSIONALS CONTACTED	
Have any external agencies been contacted (i.e. police, Social Services, NSPCC, BMC). If yes, please provide details below.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Police?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, which?	
Name and contact number	
Details of advice received	
<b>Social Services?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, which?	
Name and contact number	
Details of advice received	
<b>BMC?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Name	
Details of advice received	
<b>Other (e.g. NSPCC)?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, which?	
Name and contact number	
Details of advice received	

**Further information:**

<b>YOUR SIGNATURE</b>	
Signed	
Print name	
Date	

**REMEMBER** to maintain confidentiality on a *need to know* basis – only if it will protect the child. Do not discuss this incident with anyone other than those who need to know.

**A copy of this form should be sent to the BMC's Chief Executive and relevant BMC officer (see address and contact details at the top of this form)**

# BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

177-179 Burton Road  
Manchester M20 2BB  
www.thebmc.co.uk

Tel: 0161 445 6111  
Fax: 0161 445 4500  
e-mail: office@thebmc.co.uk

## BMC YOUTH VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION AND SELF DECLARATION FORM

This form is in two parts. Everyone fills in sections 1 to 10 inclusive.

**To work unsupervised with young people you must also fill in sections 11 and 12 for a CRB check.**

You have a right of access to information held on you and other rights under the Data Protection Act

### 1. DETAILS

First name	<b>Male</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Female</b> <input type="checkbox"/> (Tick as appropriate)	
Surname		
Current Address (including post code)		
Time at current address (years)		
If you have lived less than 3 years at your current address please include your previous address here.		
Telephone (day)		
Telephone (evening)		
Mobile		
Email		
Date of birth		
BMC Area (e.g. Peak, Lakes, NE, Y&H, NW, Midlands, SW&S, L&SE, Wales)		
Current occupation and dates of employment		
Name and address of organisation		
Role		

### 2. WHAT SORT OF EVENT DO YOU FEEL ABLE TO ASSIST THE BMC WITH

E.g. Junior team training sessions, ongoing coaching of national team members, indoor competitions, climbing meets etc.

--

### 3. EXPERIENCE and EXPERTISE

Briefly outline your mountaineering experience, indicating your general outdoor leading grade in rock climbing including dates of when you had these experiences. If you have areas of expertise that you feel may be valuable please state these and how you could use these in the service of the BMC or for the benefit of climbers, mountaineers, hill walkers.

--

**4. QUALIFICATIONS (IF ANY) OR PREVIOUS VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE**

a. supervising/instructing/coaching young people in mountaineering/rock climbing activities, indoors and outdoors: age groups, residential work, any qualifications you may have to assist on events in the UK and abroad, teaching or youth work qualifications, up to date coaching qualifications, First Aid Certificate, SPA, WGL, ML, MIA, MIC, UIAGM Guide. (use separate sheet if necessary)

b. Briefly outline your experience in supervising young people in non-mountaineering activities, e.g. teaching or youth work

**5. TRAINING** Please detail any training you may require**6. SECURITY**

Are there any reasons such as criminal convictions, cautions or bound over orders that might prevent you working with young people or limit what you can do? **YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ (Tick as appropriate)

If YES, please supply details

Are you a person known to any social services department as being an actual or potential risk to children?

**YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ (Tick as appropriate)

If YES, please supply details

Has any Social Services Department or Police Service ever conducted an enquiry or investigation into any allegations or concerns that you may pose an actual or potential risk to children or vulnerable adults?

**YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ (Tick as appropriate)

If YES, please supply details

Have you had a disciplinary sanction (from a sport, or other organisation's governing body) relating to child abuse or have you ever been subject to any disciplinary procedure or been asked to leave employment or voluntary activity due to inappropriate behaviour towards children or vulnerable adults? **YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ (Tick as appropriate)

If YES, please supply details

**7. HEALTH**

Please indicate any health problems for which you are receiving treatment:

**8. AVAILABILITY**

Please indicate your availability to be a volunteer:

Daytime	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evening	<input type="checkbox"/>
Full weekends	<input type="checkbox"/>
Weekly	<input type="checkbox"/>
Monthly	<input type="checkbox"/>
Occasional	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

I am happy, if necessary for the BMC Area Youth Co-ordinator, Team/Programme Manager or Event Organiser to contact me prior to the event: **YES** ☐ **NO** ☐ (please choose as appropriate)

<b>9. DETAILS OF NEXT OF KIN WHO CAN BE CONTACTED IN CASE OF EMERGENCY</b>	
Name	
Address (including post code)	
Telephone (day)	
Telephone (evening)	
<b>BMC Participation Statement:</b> The BMC recognises that climbing, hill walking and mountaineering are activities with a danger of personal injury or death. Participants in these activities should be aware of and accept these risks and be responsible for their own actions and involvement	
<b>10. SIGNATURE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RISK</b>	
I confirm that the above information is correct and that I do not have any criminal convictions or court orders that would prevent me from working with young people. I have read the <b>BMC Participation Statement</b> and I am aware that climbing, hill walking and mountaineering are activities with a danger of personal injury or death. I understand it is an offence to apply for, offer to do, accept or do any work with children (paid or unpaid) if disqualified from working with children.	
Signed _____	Date _____

<b>Completing the remainder of this form is the first step in applying for a Criminal Records Bureau enhanced disclosure check (a CRB check) to work unsupervised with young people. Only continue if you wish to do this. If you already hold a current Disclosure please contact the BMC.</b>	
<b>11. I HAVE READ AND AGREE WITH</b> (please mark the appropriate box / es below): If you have not received one or more of the documents listed below copies are available on the BMC website	
The BMC Child Protection Policy	<input type="checkbox"/>
The BMC Good Practice for Coaches in Climbing	<input type="checkbox"/>
The BMC Equal Opportunities Policy	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>12. REFERENCES</b>	
Appropriate referees are those who have known you for over 3 years, e.g. someone who has worked with you coaching or looking after young people and a character reference from a past employer. We will follow up references.	
<b>Referee 1</b>	
First Name	
Surname	
Address (current) <u>incl. post code</u>	
Telephone (day/eve)	
Email	
Relationship with the above	
<b>Referee 2</b>	
First Name	
Surname	
Address (current) <u>incl. post code</u>	
Telephone (day/eve)	
Email	
Relationship with the above	
<b>Please state which referee you will be giving to the CRB if asked</b>	
I am contacting the BMC and will follow the steps outlined on the next page to apply for an enhanced disclosure with the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB).	
<b>Signed</b> _____	<b>Date</b> _____



## Applying for a CRB check

To apply for a Criminal Records Bureau Enhanced Disclosure please carry out the following steps:

1. Return your completed BMC Volunteer Registration Form and Self Declaration Form to the BMC.
2. Telephone the BMC on 0161 445 6111 to request a CRB pack. The BMC is not a registered body for CRB checks. The BMC uses an umbrella body called '1<sup>st</sup> Ace Ltd'.
3. The following costs apply for enhanced CRB checks:
  - BMC volunteers, including BMC Area Youth Co-ordinators, are entitled to a free CRB check.
  - BMC Affiliated Club volunteers are required to pay a £10 administration fee.
  - Associate Member volunteers are required to pay a £10 administration fee.
  - Those who need a CRB check for their employment, including BMC Associated members who wish to use this service, are required to pay £46.
4. When you have completed your CRB application form and signed where necessary, please return to 1<sup>st</sup> Ace Ltd with the necessary payment and your required **original identity documents**.
5. Your original documents will be photocopied and returned to you as soon as possible. 1<sup>st</sup> Ace Ltd retains photocopies of your documents for six months.
6. 1<sup>st</sup> Ace Ltd forwards your completed Disclosure application form to the CRB.
7. You should receive your Enhanced Disclosure in the post within four weeks. A copy of your Enhanced Disclosure will also be sent to 1<sup>st</sup> Ace Ltd, for reference and the BMC notified.

### Useful Websites

- [www.thebmc.co.uk](http://www.thebmc.co.uk)
- [www.disclosure.gov.uk](http://www.disclosure.gov.uk)
- [www.crb.org.uk](http://www.crb.org.uk)
- [www.sportscoachuk.org](http://www.sportscoachuk.org)