

THE FELL RUNNERS ASSOCIATION LTD

WELFARE POLICY

It is the policy of the Fell Runners Association (FRA) to ensure that everyone who takes part in fell running events promoted by the FRA should be able to participate safely, taking into account the inherent hazards of the fell running environment, and be protected from neglect and physical, sexual and emotional abuse. The Welfare Policy explicitly focuses on children and young people, but the principles and codes of conduct apply to everyone.

This document is abbreviated and adapted for fell running from:

- the UK Athletics (UKA) welfare policy document “Safeguarding and Protecting Children and Vulnerable Adults in Athletics” (principles)
- England Athletics (EA) “Club Welcome Pack” (codes of conduct).

The document comprises:

- the FRA’s principles for welfare
- a statement of the role of the FRA Committee in welfare matters
- codes of conduct for relevant groups to guide good practice
- references.
- appendix - Incident Report Form.

PRINCIPLES

The key principles of this policy are as follows.

1. All fell runners whatever their age, culture, ability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.
2. Anyone under the age of 18 years is considered as a child for the purposes of the policy. They will be referred to as a child from the perspective of parents and child protection, and as a junior from the perspective of fell running.
3. In all activities and decisions involving juniors **the junior’s welfare is paramount.**
4. Clubs, coaches, race organisers and helpers will be provided with documentation and support to ensure they are able to implement the policy.
5. Adults working with juniors should be aware of and always adhere to good practice.
6. Working in partnership with juniors and their parents/carers is essential for the protection of the junior.
7. All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
8. Adults working with juniors will be protected from wrongful allegations.
9. The FRA recognises the statutory responsibility of Social Services departments to ensure the welfare of children and it is committed to working with Local Area Child Protection Committees, and, where appropriate, to comply with their procedures.

ROLE OF THE FRA COMMITTEE

In order to ensure the effective implementation of this policy the FRA, primarily through the Welfare Officer and Junior Coordinator, will work with clubs, race organisers, coaches, helpers and other individuals to ensure the welfare of the juniors in their care.

The role of the FRA Welfare Officer on behalf of the Committee is:

- To develop, monitor and review welfare policy, ensuring compliance with UKA welfare policy.
- To promote amongst clubs, coaches, race organisers, fell runners and helpers awareness of the policy, of good practice and of the legal framework in this area.
- To encourage and facilitate adherence to the policy and implementation of statutory regulations relating to child protection.
- To receive and advise on queries and reports from clubs and individuals. Reports may be submitted using an incident report form (see Appendix)
- To initiate action on reports when appropriate.

CODES OF CONDUCT

The Codes of Conduct describe good ethical conduct and practice for fell runners and those groups supporting and developing fell runners and managing the sport.

FRA AND CLUB OFFICIALS

You should:

- Consider the well-being and safety of fell runners before the development of performance
- Promote the positive aspects of fell running
- Display consistently high standards of behaviour
- Ensure that all races are appropriate to the age, ability and experience of those taking part
- Implement recommendations of UKA and EA
- Take action to amend bad practice
- Respond to any indication of abuse
- Maintain confidentiality of any junior involved in incidents or cases and of any adults, unless disclosure is required or recommended.

FELL RUNNERS

You should:

- Treat all others with the same respect and fairness that you wish to receive
- Thank those who help you to participate in fell running
- Respect diversity amongst fell runners
- Act with dignity at all times
- Challenge anyone whose behaviour falls below the expected standards of welfare in fell running
- Uphold the same values away from fell running as you do when engaged in fell running.
- In races promote safety by:
 - entering only if you have the experience and skills (e.g. navigational) necessary for the particular race
 - obeying the FRA Rules for Competition
 - complying with any safety requirements, including specified clothing and equipment
 - being able to recognise the signs of hypothermia and hypoglycaemia in yourself and others
 - if you see someone in trouble, helping them, even if it costs you the race
 - if you retire, following the organiser's retirement procedure.

AND JUNIORS SPECIFICALLY

You should:

- Notify a responsible adult if you have to go somewhere
- Not respond if someone seeks private information, unrelated to fell running e.g. home life
- Use safe transport or travel arrangements
- Avoid destructive behaviour and leave fell running areas as you find them
- Never engage in illegal or irresponsible behaviour
- Tell parents, carers or the Club Welfare Officer immediately if anything makes you concerned or uncomfortable or if you suspect a club mate has suffered from misconduct by someone else.

PARENTS/CARERS

You should:

- Check out the people who are coaching or managing your child
- Take an active interest in your child's participation
- Attend training and races whenever possible
- Ensure that your child does not take unnecessary valuable items to training or races
- Know where your child will be and who they are with
- Return a Parental Consent Form to the Club/Coach/Junior Coordinator, providing consent to activities, contact details, and relevant medical information
- Inform your child's coach of any illness or disability that needs to be taken into consideration for fell running
- Provide any necessary medication that your child needs for the duration of any trips
- Never make assumptions about your child's safety.

RACE ORGANISERS

You should:

- Know and comply with the FRA Rules for Competition
- Understand and implement the FRA Safety Requirements for Fell Races
- Follow the Access and Environmental Guidelines for Organisers of Fell Races.

COACHES

You should:

- Review your coach training documentation on welfare at intervals, including factors that promote welfare and factors that undermine welfare, and reflect on your own performance in this area as a coach
- Make sure you are appropriately qualified for activities that you coach and update your licence and education as and when required by UK Athletics
- Ensure that activities you direct or guide are appropriate for the age, maturity, experience and ability of the individual fell runner
- Clarify with fell runners (and where appropriate their parents or carers) exactly what is expected of them and what runners are entitled to expect from you
- Place the welfare and safety of the fell runner above the development of performance
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every fell runner and treat everyone equally, regardless of background or ability
- Develop working relationships with fell runners based on mutual trust and respect
- Encourage and guide fell runners to accept and take responsibility for their own behaviour and performance
- Consistently promote positive aspects of the sport, such as fair play, and never condone rule violations or the use of prohibited or age-inappropriate substances
- Avoid all behaviours that provide a bad example to others (e.g. abusive language, bullying, harassment, physical or sexual abuse)
- Challenge inappropriate behaviour or language by others
- Avoid the development of intimate relationships between yourself and athletes coached by you
- Avoid spending time alone with a junior unless clearly in view of others
- Report any accidental injury, distress or misunderstanding or misinterpretation (including if a junior appears to have been sexually aroused by your actions). A brief written report of such incidents should be submitted to the Welfare Officer as soon as possible and parents/carers notified. An incident report form is available
- Report similarly any suspected misconduct by other coaches or other people involved in fell running.

REFERENCES

UK Athletics - Safeguarding and Protecting Children and Vulnerable Adults. Policy and Procedures Document. April 2009. This document states the welfare policy of UKA.

<http://ukathletics.org.uk>

England Athletics Club Welcome Pack Template. This document provides codes of conduct for athletes and all groups supporting athletes and running athletics.

<http://www.englandathletics.org> (look under Clubs - Welfare)

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