**U18s LMC Policy Statement**

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

The LMC has a duty of care to safeguard all children and vulnerable adults involved in LMC activities from harm. All children and vulnerable adults have the right to protection and the needs of children and vulnerable adults from all backgrounds and abilities must be considered. This includes children of all ages, ethnicity, social backgrounds, abilities, sexual orientation, religious belief and political persuasion. The LMC will ensure the safety and protection of all children and vulnerable adults involved in its activities through adherence to its Child Safeguarding Policy and Codes of Practice and Guidelines.

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

**Principles**

The following principles underpin the BMC Child Safeguarding Policy:

* 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 LMC.
* 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 their age, ethnicity, abilities, social background, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, or political persuasion, have the right to live in a safe environment.
* That any sanctions used must be non-violent and must not involve humiliating children and young people.
* That the welfare of the child is paramount and will underpin all guidance.
* This guidance is mandatory for all members and volunteers.

**The LMC allows under 18s to join as members and/or attend club meets, but only with a parent/carer or an adult in loco parentis, nominated by a parent that is a paid up member of the club. In this circumstance we do not need to adopt a Child Protection Policy or appoint a Youth Officer.**

**Loco Parentis Definition;**

In Loco Parentis: A parent may give consent to anyone they wish to take their child climbing, hill walking or mountaineering. This is an arrangement between the parent and the person taking the child. The person taking the child will be in loco parentis and this requires them to exercise a duty of care that would be provided by a reasonably prudent parent. If an adult is acting in loco parentis, make sure that the parent has nominated them (not the club). Also make sure that it is clear precisely who has the duty of care at any given moment and if that duty of care is handed from one person to another. Whilst it is not a requirement, a consent form is used by many clubs for situations where an under 18 is attending with an adult in loco parentis. This is not a requirement, but can prove useful. When taking another person’s child climbing, hill walking or mountaineering it is wise to inform both the parent and child about the nature of the activities to be undertaken and any arrangements, so they can decide whether they are happy with these or decline the offer if they are not. It is important that they are not only informed about the activities, but also understand the nature of them/risks attached, so that they can make an informed decision. There is a download (Young people: Climbing, Hill Walking, Mountaineering, A Parent's Guide) http://www.thebmc.co.uk/Download.aspx?id=9 on the BMC website to help parents understand these risks