



Safeguarding in Sport

Empowering Clubs, Elevating Coaches, Inspiring Gymnasts.

Learning Outcomes:

Understand the importance of safeguarding within the context of sports and recreational activities

Identify key safeguarding principles, policies, and procedures relevant to sports organisations.

Recognise signs and indicators of abuse, neglect, and exploitation in the sporting environment.

Demonstrate knowledge of legal and ethical responsibilities regarding safeguarding in sports.

Develop skills in effective communication and reporting procedures for safeguarding concerns.

Apply safeguarding strategies to promote a safe and inclusive sporting environment for participants of all ages.

Reflect on personal attitudes and biases related to safeguarding and diversity in sports settings.

Access and utilise resources for ongoing professional development in safeguarding practices in sports.

Modules:

Introduction to Safeguarding

Types of Abuse and Their Indicators

Responding to Concerns About Abuse

How to Report and Record a Concern

Good Practice in Sport

1.Introduction to Safeguarding



Welcome to the Safeguarding in Sport course, where we delve into essential principles and practices to ensure the safety and well-being of all participants in sports and recreational activities. Safeguarding is paramount in fostering a positive and inclusive environment where individuals can thrive, free from harm and exploitation. Throughout this course, we will explore the fundamental concepts of safeguarding, including identifying signs of abuse, understanding legal responsibilities, implementing effective safeguarding policies, and promoting a culture of safety within sports organisations. Whether you're a coach, administrator, volunteer, or participant, this course will empower you with the knowledge and skills to uphold safeguarding standards and contribute to a safe and enjoyable sporting experience for everyone involved. Join us as we embark on this journey to prioritise protection, integrity, and respect in the world of sports.

What is Safeguarding?

Safeguarding ensures a safe environment where individuals, especially vulnerable populations, are protected from harm, abuse, neglect, or exploitation. It involves measures to prevent risks, recognise signs of danger, and respond effectively to ensure everyone's well-being.

Reflect on the following statements: how many of them can you answer yes to?

- My club has a safeguarding policy, I know where it is and I'm aware on its contents.
- My clubs safeguarding policy is reviewed regularly and updated every three years.
- We strive for excellence in keeping children and adults safe and free from harassment and bullying.
- I know when and how to report a safeguarding concern.
- I am familiar with indicators of abuse to look out for and report.
- My club gives parents and athletes joining information that has details about safe handovers, our safeguarding policy, our welfare officer and our code of conduct etc.

Does this apply to all of the United Kingdom?

The core safeguarding principles discussed in this course are applicable as best practice across all four nations of the United Kingdom. Nonetheless, there are minor differences in legislation, terminology, definitions, and procedural specifics among these nations.

Key Definitions/Terminology

Child: In England, Northern Ireland, and Scotland, a child is defined as someone under the age of 18. In Scotland, an individual is considered an adult at 16 years old, although the definition of 'child' may vary depending on the legal context, as outlined in statutory guidance. For the purposes of this Safeguarding in Sport course, 'child' refers to anyone under the age of 18.

Safeguarding and Child Protection: In England, Northern Ireland, and Wales, these terms are defined in statutory guidance. Although the definitions may vary slightly, the underlying principles remain consistent. In Scotland, while safeguarding is not specifically defined in statutory guidance, child protection is defined as ensuring the protection of children from abuse or neglect.

Working Together to Safeguard Children

- Providing assistance and support to children promptly when issues arise, ensuring protection from maltreatment.
- Preventing harm to a child's mental and physical health and development.
- Ensuring that children's experiences at your club align with the delivery of safe and effective care.

- Taking steps to ensure optimal outcomes for all children within the club.

Why is Safeguarding Training Important?

Safeguarding training is crucial to ensure the safety and well-being of individuals, especially vulnerable populations, within various settings.

Statistics from a Europe-wide study into Child Abuse in sport tell us that:

- Around 75% of respondents reported having experienced abuse inside sport before the age of 18.
- Abuse was experienced by more male respondents (79%) than female respondents (71%) although both figures are high.
- Abuse against children took place across the full range of settings in which sport is provided, but most often in the sport club.
- Most respondents did not disclose their most serious experience and a disclosure to someone inside sport was rare.
- All types of abuse were experienced in sport.
- Abuse in sport is perpetrated by both peers (e.g. team members) and adults, and the perpetrators were usually known to the children.

Who Harms or Abuses Children:

- A family member
- A family friend
- Another young person
- An education professional
- A caregiver
- A trusted leader
- A sports coach
- A stranger on the internet

Those who harm children can often hide in plain sight, so it's important never to make assumptions about who could and could not have been involved.

- Abuse can happen anywhere, including home, someone else's house, in public, in a 'safe' environment, school, sports clubs and online
- Abuse can be instigated by all genders
- Children can be harmed and abused by other minors as well as adults
- Children can be abused by someone they know or a stranger
- Abusers who use sports clubs to target children may have been abusing for many years

Why sport can provide an opportunity for those seeking to harm and abuse:

- Abusers can misuse their power if they hold positions of trust or authority within sports settings, clubs or organisations.
- Some activities offer the opportunity for close personal contact with children. This can be used to disguise abuse.
- Sometimes emotional abuse or bullying behaviour, by peers or adults can be incorrectly dismissed as “banter”.
- The need for travel or overnight stays might be even as opportunities by those seeking to harm or abuse.

Your Responsibilities

It is mandatory for all individuals working with children and families to be trained in safeguarding procedures. This includes having a safeguarding children policy in place at all establishments where children are present.

A designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or welfare officer should also be appointed. They are responsible for receiving reports of concerns and should be the first point of contact for children and parents who have worries.

Sports clubs and organisations without their own lead or welfare officer can rely on the National Governing Body (NGB) or active partnership for their sport. These organisations typically have designated personnel and provide sample policies. Alternatively, clubs can seek guidance from their local authority or contact the NSPCC for advice on safeguarding matters.

Examples of Poor Practice

- Not showing due regard for the safety of the children and participating in the activities
- Making fun of or mocking a child
- Picking on an individual or groups of children
- Making racist, sexist or homophobic remarks
- Acting inappropriately with children, such as being “friends” with them on social media
- Favouriting one child or setting one child out from the others

Legislation and Guidance

England and Wales :

- The Children Act 1989
- The Children Act 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (England)

Scotland :

- National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland
- Getting it right for Every Child

Northern Ireland :

- Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland
- CPSU Standards (Website)

Each UK country has documented standards to provide framework to help create a safe sporting environment for children and young people and protect them from harm. Those for England are:

1. **Policy and Procedures for Responding to Concerns** - your organisation should have clear guidance on what to do if concerns arise
2. **Operating Systems** - policies and procedures must be effectively implemented.
3. **Prevention** - measures must help minimise the possibility of children and young people being abused by those in a position of trust.
4. **Codes of Ethics and Conduct** - these must be given to everyone.
5. **Equality** - the needs of all children and young people must be given to everyone.
6. **Communication** - you must keep their knowledge updated.
7. **Education and Training** - staff must keep their knowledge updated.
8. **Access to advice and support** - adults and children are assisted to get help when required.
9. **Implementation and monitoring** - actions taken are regularly monitored and evaluated.
10. **Influencing** - action must be taken to influence, encourage and promote the adoption and implementation of measures by partner organisations.

2.Types of Abuse and Their Indicators



Types of Abuse

There are four main categories of abuse: **physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional and neglect.**

The following are examples of types of maltreatment which fall within these categories

- Online abuse
- Bullying and cyberbullying
- Grooming
- Child sexual exploitation
- Child trafficking
- County lines and child criminal exploitation
- So called Honour-based abuse, including violence, force marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Radicalisation and extremism
- Harmful sexual behaviour
- Racism, sexism and abuse based on sexual orientation
- Child on child abuse
- Exposure to parental mental health issues or substance abuse
- Exposure to or living with domestic abuse

Every child is an individual - no two children will display exactly the same signs. Also, some signs, such as becoming withdrawn, might indicate many types of abuse. The key is to be vigilant.

Vulnerable children need even more vigilant attention, as low self-esteem may make them easier to groom or control. Some vulnerable children may not have the skills to recognise inappropriate behaviour.

Any child can be targeted by those seeking to harm or abuse, but children who are most at risk include those who:

- Have special educational needs and/or disability (SEND)
- Show signs of engaging in anti-social or criminal behaviour
- Have challenging family circumstances, such as substance misuse, domestic violence or mental health problems
- Have been previously abused or neglected, or showing early signs of abuse or neglect
- Feel isolated, have few friends and don't 'fit in'
- Identify as, or are perceived as LGBTQ+
- Have behavioural or mental health issues
- Are persistently absent or going missing from education

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse involves behaviours that harm a child's self-worth or emotional well-being, such as constant criticism, rejection, or manipulation.

Emotional Abuse may involve:

- Telling a child that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person,
- Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or making fun of what they communicate.
- Age-or developmentally-inappropriate expectations being imposed.
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
- Bullying, causing children to feel frightened or in danger

Indicators that are a cause for concern include:

- You witness the child being shouted at unnecessarily
- The child is being unfavourably compared to another child
- There are high expectations of the child
- The child is made to feel worthless or inadequate
- Excessive and/or frequent punishments
- Delayed language development
- Excessive or frequent punishments
- An adult is hostile towards the child
- The child is ridiculed, blamed, frightened or threatened
- The child overreacts when they make a mistake

Children and Domestic Abuse

Children exposed to domestic abuse are at risk of emotional, psychological, and sometimes physical harm. A child who is experiencing domestic abuse may:

- Become aggressive, withdrawn or act in some unexpected way. Sometimes, children who live with domestic abuse replicate what they see at home. This can manifest in violent outbursts or bullying.
- Display anti-social behaviour or become involved with the drugs or alcohol. This can be as a form of temporary escape.
- Suffer from depression, anxiety and other mental health problems.
- Suffer from depression, anxiety and other mental health problems.
- Underachieve academically
- Have frequent nightmares.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse involves intentionally causing physical harm or injury to a child through actions like hitting, shaking, or burning. Physical abuse may involve:

- Hitting, shaking or throwing
- Poisoning
- Burning or scalding
- Drowning suffocating
- Fabrication of symptoms or deliberate induction of illness in a child

Indicators of physical abuse that are a cause for concern include:

- Bruises where they wouldn't normally be found, such as the back of the legs, top of the arms and neck.
- Fractures and broken bones
- Bite marks
- Burns and scalds that don't look accidental
- Injuries or bruises to the ears
- Frequent injuries
- A child being restrained in their room
- A child being told that they are ill (fabricated illness by proxy)
- A child being given something purposefully to harm them such as salt, medication or alcohol.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves engaging a child in sexual activities, whether through force, coercion, or manipulation. indicators of sexual abuse that are a cause for concern include:

- The child being obsessively clean
- An unwillingness to undress in front of others, such as in the changing rooms.
- Age-inappropriate knowledge and behaviour
- Concealed pregnancy, abdominal pain, bleeding or sexually transmitted infections
- Changes in mood or behaviour

Neglect

Neglect is the failure to provide for a child's basic needs, such as food, shelter, medical care, education, and emotional support. Neglect in the setting can include those in position of authority repeatedly:

- Failing to ensure safety, or use of safety equipment
- Not seeking first aid or medical attention for a child when needed
- Not responding appropriately to concerns raised
- Ignoring good practice guidelines, therefore exposing children to risk of injury
- Expecting children to continue to participate when they are unwell or injured
- Not ensuring adequate hydration or clothing in extreme weather conditions

Indicators that neglect at home may be a cause for concern include:

- Knowledge that a child is being left home alone
- The child is not being fed, eating a poor diet or always being hungry
- The child having poor hygiene; not having adequate or clean clothing or kit
- The child regularly missing sessions
- The child not being given medication when needed
- The child is small, underweight or gaunt
- The child is not loved or given affection

Online Abuse

Online abuse involves using digital platforms to harm, exploit, or manipulate a child, including through cyberbullying, grooming, or exposure to inappropriate content.

- Sending threatening, intimidating, upsetting or abusive messages
- Creating and sharing embarrassing or malicious images or videos
- Trolling - sending menacing or upsetting messages including via social media or online games
- Pile on harassment - where there are a group of perpetrators
- Forwarding on publicly posting private information or images

- Excluding a child from online games, activities or groups
- Setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child
- Creating fake accounts, and hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name

The 4 c's of online risk are

Content - being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content

Contact- being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users

Conduct - Online behaviour that increases the likelihood of or cause harm

Commerce - risks with financial implication

A child who is being abused online may:

- Begin to spend much more time, or significantly less time, online than before, including texting, games or using social media
- Become withdrawn, upset, distressed and agitated, especially after using the internet on their phone
- Be secretive and defensive about who they are speaking to online or what they are doing

Grooming

Grooming is the process by which an individual builds a relationship with a child to gain their trust for the purpose of exploitation or abuse.

The online world can enable groomers to anonymously and easily target and exploit children through social media, chat rooms, and gaming platforms. In order to gain a Child's trust the groomer may:

- Pretend to someone they're not - it is easy for groomers to hide their identity online.
- Offer advice and understanding - groomers may target children whose online comments suggest vulnerability and then be empathetic to establish a relationship with them.
- Lavish a child - with compliments, attention and gifts

Groomers may not try and meet up with the child in person - they increasingly look to exploit children by coercing them into taking part in online sexual activity. Groomers in gangs often target children this way by getting a child's peer to ask for images.

Signs that a child is being groomed may include:

- Sudden changes in behaviour
- Sudden changes in attendance patterns; missing education

- Secretive use of technology
- Unexplained gifts

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child sexual exploitation involves manipulating or coercing a child into sexual activity in exchange for money, gifts, or other forms of benefit.

Signs of CSE:

- Hanging out with groups of older people and gangs; having older romantic partners
- Being intimidated and fearful of certain people or situations
- Being involved in petty crime, such as shoplifting
- Display change in physical appearance, such as weight loss
- Going missing from home, care or education
- Showing changes in behaviour and attitude

Child criminal Exploitation (CCE): County Lines

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), often referred to as "County Lines," involves gangs exploiting children to transport and sell drugs across different areas, often using threats or violence. Indicators that a child may be being exposed to being exploited through county Lines include if the child:

- Has episodes of going missing, or seen hanging around with older groups
- Has been the victim or perpetrator of serious violence (e.g. knife crime)
- Is involved in receiving requests for drugs via a phone line, moving drugs, handing over and collecting money for drugs
- Is found in accommodation that they have no connection with (a 'trap house') or in a hotel room where there is drug activity.
- Owes a 'debt bond' on their exploiters
- show signs of substance abuse

3. Responding to Concerns About Abuse



There are several ways that a concern about a child might come to your attention.

- You may witness something yourself, such as physical injuries or behavioural changes. You may also have concerns about the way another adult is behaving towards a child.
- You may overhear somebody voicing their concerns, such as parents talking outside the changing rooms.
- Another adult or child in your club, organisation or activity setting, may tell you about something they heard or saw.
- A child may tell you that they are being abused. This may directly or inadvertently, or they may say something that raises a concern.

If you have a concern about a child, then it is paramount that you know who to report it to and do so without delay. Not reporting is never an option.

Before a child joins a club, parents should be encouraged to ask for a copy of your safeguarding policy and be told who to report to if they have concerns. Some parents might be reluctant to ask, so staff or volunteers should be proactive, and aim to empower them to speak out if they have a concern.

Why Don't Children Talk about Abuse?

- Feeling ashamed, guilty or to blame
- Feel too frightened to say anything
- Having conflicting feelings about their abuser, they may feel loyal towards them
- Worry about getting people in trouble
- Think that they won't be believed

- Feeling trapped or intimidated
- Feeling frightened for their family due to threats from abuser
- Worrying that speaking out may negatively impact their sporting prospects or position
- Not knowing who to report to
- Not having the ability to speak out - due to age or communication difficulties

What to Say and What Not to Say

If a child does disclose information to you, it can be difficult to know how best to respond, especially if it was unexpected. How you react is incredibly important.

A good response means you should:

- Remain calm and level-headed. Avoid becoming emotional and conveying shock, anger or panic to the child
- Listen well; give the child the chance to say what they need to say what they need to, without rushing them, interrupting them or asking questions
- Reassure the child and say that they've done the right thing by speaking to you

You should never:

- make assumptions about what the child is experiencing
- Convey to the child that you don't believe them
- Describe the alleged abuser using negative words and phrases
- Interview the child with too many questions
- Promise that you will be able to keep what they have disclosed a secret
- Try to investigate the concern: Your job is to listen and report

What Should I Do Next?

If you have any concerns about a child or young person you must write down what you have been told or your concern and:

1. Report your concerns to your designated safeguarding lead or welfare officer straight away. If there is no DSL available, you should report the concern yourself.
2. If you believe that a child is at risk of immediate harm, call the police without delay.
3. Your local authority website or local safeguarding children partnership also have safeguarding pages available with details of telephone numbers to call if you need further advice or assistance.

Why Many Adults Don't Take Action

- Fear of retaliation from the abuser or their associates.
- Concerns about not being believed or taken seriously.
- Lack of awareness of the signs and symptoms of child abuse.
- Misunderstanding or lack of knowledge about reporting procedures.
- Belief that someone else will take responsibility or intervene.
- Fear of causing disruption or negative consequences for the child or family.
- Cultural or societal norms that discourage reporting or intervening in family matters.
- Trust issues with authorities or skepticism about the effectiveness of reporting.
- Personal biases or judgments about the situation or individuals involved.
- Reluctance to get involved due to personal or professional reasons.

It is essential for adults to report child abuse to protect vulnerable children from further harm, ensure their safety, and provide them with the support and intervention they need to heal and thrive.

Empowering Parents

All clubs and organisations should inform parents and children of:

1. Safeguarding policy - ensure it is accessible at all times, such as on the clubs website in an easy-to-access location.
2. Details of the safeguarding team or welfare officer - including their contact details, introduce them if possible.
3. The procedure to follow if they have a concern, no matter how small.

4.How to Report and Record a Concern



If a concern comes to your attention, then there are five key steps to follow:

1. Deal with any immediate medical needs and call the police if you think a crime has been committed. Where relevant, do not touch any evidence and preserve the scene for police.
2. Speak to your designated lead or welfare officer or seek advice from social care, the local authority designated officer (LADO), or the NSPCC.
3. Speak to the child's parents, if appropriate, and doing so would not put the child or anyone else at further risk.
4. Gather information and be ready to report it (where appropriate and with support from the welfare officer).
5. Record and date what has occurred.

How and When to Report a Concern

Sports clubs and organisations should have a safeguarding children policy which will tell you what to do if you have a concern. Ensure you've read this and are familiar with the procedures it recommends.

You should report a concern to your designated safeguarding lead or welfare officer as soon as possible and within 24 hours of it coming to your attention.

The lead officer then has the responsibility of passing this report onto your local authority, who will decide what response is necessary within one day. If the circumstances require LADO to be informed, this must be done within one working day of an allegation or concern being reviewed. In urgent cases the LADO should be contacted immediately.

If you're unable to get in contact with your lead or you notice concern whilst you're not at the club and you think the child may be in immediate risk, then it can be difficult to know what to do. In this situation, you should speak to social care or the police directly. Don't wait for your lead to become available. It is important to act quickly to prevent a child from coming to further harm.

When to report to LADO

- The individual behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child.
- The individual possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children.
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

Should I Tell the Child's Parents?

You may wish to talk to the Child or their parents about your concerns or the actions you've taken. However, you should only do this with the agreement of your designated lead or welfare officer.

Talking to the parents can be helpful in certain situations such as:

- They may have a valid explanation for your concerns or some additional information, which puts your mind at rest
- They may be struggling with the child so are grateful for some support
- It allows you to build a relationship with the family, should you need to liaise with them about any concerns in the future

However, you should never talk to the parents if doing so might:

- Place the child at further risk of harm
- Put you or anyone else at risk
- Interfere with a criminal investigation
- Cause an unreasonable delay in making a referral to social care

Next Steps

Social care will evaluate the risk of harm to the child and determine the necessary actions if their threshold is met. They may need to:

- Talk to professionals who are involved with the family (this could be you).
- Check social care records.
- Have the child medically examined if required.

- Lisa with the police if it seems likely that a criminal act has been committed.

There may be a meeting held involving everyone working with the child. You might be asked to contribute to this.

Most local areas have a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) or equivalent. This brings professionals together so that they can work together to share information and protect children in their area.

If their threshold for intervention isn't met, social care may also make the decision not to get involved. If this happens, they should give you advice on how to address your concerns, especially if you don't agree with the chosen outcome.

If you're not satisfied with the decision on response you get after making a referral, then you or your DSL can escalate the matter to a social care manager in writing.

If social care still decides not to take action, and you remain concerned about the child, then you should monitor the situation and report the matter again if circumstances change.

Your involvement doesn't stop after the referral has been made. If your DSL hasn't heard back from social care within three days of the referral, then you should contact them to find out what's happening.

Remember, if your base is in Scotland or Northern Ireland, there may be slight differences in procedures described.

Record Keeping

Maintaining well-kept records is crucial for fulfilling your safeguarding responsibilities. They provide evidence of ongoing concerns and demonstrate that your club is proactive in ensuring the safety of children.

You should record your concerns as soon as possible. Ideally, this should be as soon as they come to your attention to ensure that all the key information is documented.

Think about a conversation you had with someone yesterday - can you remember their words well enough to write them down now? Or would your memory of the conversation be better if you had written it down in time?

The longer you leave it to record your concerns, the hazier your memory may be and you may forget details or confuse them, which can dramatically affect the accuracy of your report.

To keep records that are efficient and helpful, you should:

- Ensure that your record is clear, accurate and concise. Write clearly and legibly.
- Base your records on the facts that you know, to your opinion of what you think you know.
- Use simple language that everyone can understand.
- Record all actions taken and all decisions that are made.
- Only share the record with people who need to see it as part of their role. Records must be kept confidential and locked away or password protected.

What to Record

- The name, age, gender and ethnicity of the child
- Details of the injury or abuse, who may be involved, their relationship with the child and any other contextual information that might be useful
- The date and time of the incident or allegation
- Who was involved or present at the time
- Details of who raised the concern (If it was another child or adult)
- A brief account of what you were doing before and during the time that the concern was raised
- Who said what, in their exact words
- Details of any immediate actions taken

5. Good Practice in Sport



Good Practice Guidelines

Sports clubs and organisations should provide a set of best practice guidelines for you to review. These guidelines will help you understand the club's policies and the procedures you need to follow to ensure the highest standards of safeguarding are upheld.

Guidelines you should have access to include:

- a safeguarding policy
- Details on what to do if you have a concern, including concerns about neglect, abuse, bullying and online abuse.
- A code of conduct for staff, volunteers, parents and kids.
- Safer recruitment
- Staff Induction and volunteer training
- Staff and volunteer safeguarding children training
- A social media and photography policy
- Guidance on transportation
- Guidance on the handover of children
- Guidance on teaching one-on-one sports

Safeguarding Policy

A safeguarding policy in the context of children's sport should outline clear procedures and guidelines to ensure the safety and well-being of all young athletes. It should detail the responsibilities of coaches, staff, and volunteers in identifying and reporting any concerns related to abuse or neglect. The policy must include protocols for handling allegations, ensuring confidentiality, and providing support to affected individuals. Additionally, it should specify the training requirements for all personnel involved in the sport, emphasizing the importance of creating a safe and inclusive environment. The policy should also address safe recruitment practices, codes of conduct, and guidelines for appropriate interactions with children, ensuring that every aspect of the sport prioritizes the protection and welfare of young participants. The policy should include topics such as:

- Safer recruitment
- How reports of abuse will be handled
- Confidentiality
- Photography, media and social media policies

Sports Code of Conduct

A sports code of conduct is a set of guidelines and expectations that govern the behavior of all participants, including athletes, coaches, parents, and officials, within a sporting environment. It should outline the principles of fair play, respect, and integrity that are fundamental to maintaining a positive and safe sporting culture. The code should detail acceptable and unacceptable behaviours, emphasising the importance of sportsmanship, respect for others, and adherence to rules and regulations. It should also provide clear consequences for violations, ensuring that there are mechanisms in place to address and rectify any breaches. Additionally, the code of conduct should promote inclusivity and equality, ensuring that all participants feel valued and respected regardless of their background or abilities. By setting these standards, the code of conduct helps to create a supportive and enjoyable environment where everyone can thrive and excel in their sporting endeavours. Some key principles of a code of conduct are that you should:

- Always prioritises the welfare of children
- Never have sole responsibility for children
- Only provide personal or intimate care if its crucial incident situation, and never alone.
- Never give out personal details and take care on social media
- Always behave appropriately
- Listen to and respect children and avoid favouritism
- Remember you are in a position of trust and act in a professional manner
- Always report any concerns about a child or the behaviour of a colleague
- Treat everyone with respect and apply zero-tolerance to any harassment or discrimination

Ways to Promote Excellence in Safeguarding

- Putting up posters with contact details of the clubs welfare officer in the toilets, such as on the back of the toilet doors, so when children can access the information in private. You could use QR codes for children to scan on their phones or include a 'tear off' information for them to take with them.
- Giving bitesized reminder talks for children and parents, to remind them of who to speak to if they have a concern.
- Using handouts for new parents on your clubs safeguarding procedures.
- Giving parents and other adults clarity on what is and isn't acceptable when it comes to photos, videos and using social media.
- Empowering children to know what is and isn't acceptable.
- Encouraging positive behaviour whilst watching matches and towards others i.e. not tolerating harassment and celebrating equality and diversity.

Hormonal Imbalances: Eating disorders can disrupt the normal functioning of the endocrine system, causing hormonal disturbances. Common consequences include irregular or absent menstrual cycles (amenorrhoea) in females, reduced bone density (osteoporosis), and delayed growth in adolescents.

Cardiovascular Complications: Eating disorders, particularly those involving severe weight loss and malnutrition, place significant strain on the cardiovascular system. Individuals may experience a low heart rate, low blood pressure, and an increased risk of cardiac issues such as heart failure and sudden cardiac arrest.

Safer Recruitment

Your goal is to recruit workers or volunteers who are the best fit for the role, share your safeguarding values, and will positively impact the children's lives.

The reality is that adults who pose a risk to children can be found in any environment and in any role, even in "honourable" positions such as club volunteers and coaches. These individuals are often adept at concealing their behaviours and intentions.

Unsuitable adults may see your job or volunteer vacancy as the perfect opportunity to access children or young people.

In order to recruit good candidates, you must give consideration to safeguarding every step of the way, from planning and advertising your vacancy, all the way to making a job offer. Candidate must be asked about their attitude towards safeguarding during the interview.

Your recruitment process must include:

- Obtaining vetting checks (i.e. DBS)
- Obtaining references for candidates
- Giving candidates a copy of your safeguarding policy so they are aware of your responsibilities

Staff Training

All new employees and volunteers should receive thorough induction training and start work on a six-month probationary period. This will allow you to monitor the candidate during their first few weeks and carefully track their progress, attitudes and behaviours. They should also be given a copy of your safeguarding policy and code of conduct.

Everyone should be trained in safeguarding and understand how to identify the signs of abuse and neglect and they must be encouraged to report any concerns they have.

This should then be supplemented with regular training updates for all staff and volunteers through e-bulletins or similar, as well as regular, more formal safeguarding refresher training.

Media and Photography Policy

Many clubs want to take photos and videos of their children, volunteers and staff members for communication and promotional materials. Parents also often want to take photos or videos.

Your policy should state:

- all children featured in club publications will be appropriately dressed.
- If possible, the image will focus on the activity taking place and not a specific child.
- No images of children featured in club publications will be accompanied by personal details such as their home address.
- Any photo or video that is put on social media will not include any child whose safety could be compromised by the image being shared.
- mobile phone cameras are not to be used in the changing rooms
- Files will be stored securely.
- Parents are encouraged not to share photos or videos of their children on social media, especially if there are other children in the photo or video.
- To comply with data protection law, you must obtain consent from the individuals before using images or videos of them.
- Young people who are over 18 can provide their own consent
- Children under 18 must have parental consent.

Transportation and Handovers

Having a clear transportation and handovers policy is crucial for any sports club or organisation to ensure the safety and well-being of children. Such a policy helps establish consistent protocols and safeguards against potential risks during the transit and handover process. A comprehensive transportation and handovers policy should include guidelines on who is authorised to transport children, ensuring that drivers are vetted and have appropriate licenses and insurance. It should outline the procedures for picking up and dropping off children, including designated handover points and the need for parental or guardian consent. Additionally, the policy should address the importance of maintaining a log of transportation details and ensuring effective communication between parents, guardians, and club officials. By implementing a robust transportation and handovers policy, clubs can provide a secure environment for children, fostering trust and confidence among parents and guardians.
