

SAFEGAURDING CHILDREN IN SPORT

September 2023 / Isabella Atkinson



DUTY OF CARE

A duty of care is a legal obligation which is imposed on an organisation or an individual that requires them to adhere to a standard of reasonable care when undertaking any task or act that could potentially cause harm to another.

Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places duties on a range of organisations and individuals to ensure their function and any services they contract out to others, are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

This duty extends to sports organisations and clubs who deliver sports activities to children.

Paid and volunteer staff have a duty to be aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, how they should respond to child protection concerns and make a referral to the local authority children's social care, police, local authority designated officer (LADO) or other agencies if necessary.

In order to ensure that they are fulfilling their duty of care, all clubs should ensure that the policies and procedures contained within this handbook are followed in full at all times. All adults involved in delivering activities for children should complete England Ice Hockey (EIH) designated safeguarding training and know where to access information and who to contact if they have any concerns.

CONTEXTUAL SAFEGAURDING

Contextual safeguarding is understanding and responding to children's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. Historically protecting children from harm have focused on the risk factors mainly from the home environment, and most commonly from a parent, a carer, or other trusted adult and this method does always address the time that children spend outside the home and the influence of peers and others who the children are regularly in contact with on children's safety and development.

Contextual safeguarding addresses the impact of the outside situation's context on children's lives, and consequently their safety. Contextual safeguarding identifies and responds to harm and abuse children can encounter outside their home and away from their parents and usual care givers. It's a method that looks at how interventions can change the holistic environment that children encounter, to make them safer for all children, as opposed to focusing on an individual.

POSITIONS OF TRUST

From 28 June 2022, the law in England and Wales has been updated and now states that those in a position of trust in sports organisations, such as a coach, manager or any other official cannot legally have a sexual relationship with young people they look after (those under the age of 18 year of age).

The new policy defines sport: a) any game in which physical skill is the predominant factor, and b) any form of physical recreation which is also engaged in for purposes of competition or display.

Further to this, the Sexual Offences Act 2003 states: "It is an offence for a person aged 18 years or over to involve a child under that age in sexual activity where he or she is in a specified

position of trust in relation to that child. This includes those who care for, advise, supervise or train children and young people.”

The EIH's policy in this respect is that coaches and volunteers within our clubs are in positions of trust and authority. We also recognise the power and influence they have over junior players, in particular that players may perceive that their success or failure may be dependent on their coach. It is therefore a requirement that there is no sexual relationship should exist between any player under 18 years of age and any adult volunteering or working for an Ice Hockey club. The relationship between junior players and volunteers coach must be appropriate at all times. Where there is any report or suspicion of inappropriate relationships an investigation may be initiated, during which the parties may need to be suspended from involvement with the club, and disciplinary action may result if any misconduct is identified.

Coaches and volunteers should be careful to avoid any actions which could be construed as favouritism towards a particular player or players. The EIH recognises that it is not unusual for children to develop strong feelings towards a coach or another volunteer, often termed a 'crush' or 'hero worship'. Where this is observed or suspected, it should be discussed with the Club DSL and measures put in place to ensure that no situations arise where any allegation of misconduct can be made.

Further information can be found here: <https://thecpsu.org.uk/resource-library/best-practice/abuse-in-positions-of-trust-within-sport/>

WHO MIGHT ABUSE A CHILD?

As outlined in this document, abuse of children can take many forms, and as such, 'abusers' also can also be of any gender, age, background, position, and relationship to the child. Abusers could be:

- A member of the child's family.
- A stranger.
- An acquaintance.
- A person in a position of influence or power over the child (coach, teacher etc).
- Another child.
- Any gender.

WHAT CONSTITUTES HARM TO A CHILD

Any harm done to a person by the acts or omissions of another.

TYPES OF CHILD ABUSE

Abuse is generally defined as any action by another person that causes significant harm to a child or when someone fails to prevent harm to a child. It is typically broken down into four categories: physical, sexual, emotional, and neglect. It is important to remember, however, that these types of abuse are not mutually exclusive, and also that the examples given are not exhaustive. In addition, there can be financial or material abuse, discrimination, domestic abuse, bullying, Child Sexual Exploitation, Child Criminal Exploitation, harassment, and radicalisation.

Neglect: The persistent failure to meet a young person's physical and psychological needs, likely to result in the impairment of their health or development. It can include:

- Failure to provide adequate food, shelter, or clothing.
- Failing to protect from danger or harm.
- Failure to access appropriate medical care or treatment.
- Failure to ensure adequate supervision / leaving a child with unsuitable carers.
- Failure to ensure access to suitable education.
- Failure to respond to basic emotional needs.

Neglect often highlights a failure to discharge a duty of care. An example of neglect in a sports context could be that a coach or manager exposes a child to unnecessary risk or injury.

Sexual harm: Is broadly defined as forcing, enticing, or inciting a child to take part in any sexual activity. This may not involve violence and the child may not realise that what is happening is abuse. Sexual abuse can be contact abuse, or non-contact abuse.

Contact abuse is that in which the abuser engages in any physical contact with the child. It could include actions such as:

- Sexual touching of any part of the body whether the child is wearing clothes or not.
- Rape or penetration by putting an object or body part inside a child's mouth, vagina, or anus.
- Forcing or encouraging a child to take part in sexual activity.
- Making a child take their clothes off, touch someone else's genitals or masturbate.

Non-contact abuse involves non-touching activities. It can happen online or in person. It could include:

- Encouraging a child to watch or hear sexual acts.
- Not taking proper measures to prevent a child being exposed to sexual activities by others.
- Showing pornography to a child.
- Making, viewing, or distributing child abuse images. In a sports context this could include taking images of a child when they are getting changed in the changing rooms.
- Allowing someone else to make, view or distribute child abuse images.
- Meeting a child following face-to-face or online sexual grooming with the intent of abusing them.
- Sexually exploiting a child for money, power, or status (child sexual exploitation).

- Persuading or forcing a child to send or post sexually explicit images of themselves. This is sometimes referred to as “sexting”.
- Persuading or forcing a child to take part in sexual activities via a webcam or smartphone.
- Having sexual conversations with a child by text or online.

Once abusers are in possession of sexually explicit images, video or sexual conversations they may threaten to send these to the child’s friends and family or post them online unless the child agrees to take part in other sexual activity or draw other children into the abuse.

Images or videos often continue to be shared or available online, potentially forever, perpetuating the abuse long after the original offence took place.

Physical harm: Deliberately hurting a child. May include acts such as:

- Hitting, slapping, burning, shaking, kicking, suffocating, shaking, throwing, pushing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning (this includes pulling any part of the kit and equipment, and includes the face cage).
- It can also involve a parent fabricating or inducing illness in a young person.
- In sport, physical abuse might involve forcing a child to train or compete beyond their capabilities or imposing the use of performance enhancing drugs.

Emotional Harm: Is the ongoing psychological abuse or emotional mistreatment of a child, which over time will damage the child’s emotional wellbeing and development. Can include:

- Causing a young person to feel worthless, unloved, afraid, or important only if they meet another person’s needs.
- Over-protection, prevention from normal social interaction, and limiting exploration and learning.
- Exposure to the ill-treatment of others.
- Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or making fun of what they say or how they communicate.
- Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children e.g. interactions that are beyond the child’s developmental capability.
- Serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger.
- The exploitation or corruption of children.

Within sport emotional harm may occur where the expectations of parents or coaches are unrealistic, and the young person is consistently unable to meet them. Emotional harm could also be caused by constant negative feedback, or coaches who continuously criticise, use sarcasm, or generally belittle children.

Bullying: the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal, or psychological. It can happen face to face or through cyberspace.

Bullying can affect a child's health and development and cause them significant harm (including self-harm).

The Equality Act of 2010 brought together various anti-discrimination laws into one single act, so any unlawful treatment (discrimination, harassment or victimisation) relating to one of the Equality Act protected characteristics, since 2010 is covered by this area of employment law. The Equality Act 2010: protected characteristics and types of discrimination. The Equality Act covers exactly the same groups of individuals that were protected by the previous legislation. However, the headings of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership. Bullying can be:

- Verbal: name calling, persistent teasing, mocking, taunting, and threats.
- Physical: any degree of physical violence, intimidating behaviour, theft, or intentional damage of possessions.
- Emotional: excluding people, tormenting, ridiculing, humiliation, setting up, spreading rumours.
- Cyber bullying: misuse of digital technologies to bully a person or group. This might be through the use of messages or actions that are threatening and/or intended to cause offence, anxiety, or humiliation.

Bullying is typically based on a perceived difference, and can include:

- **Racist:** bullying based on ethnicity, skin colour, and language, religious or cultural practices.
- **Homophobic:** bullying based on a child's sexuality.
- **Gender / transphobic:** bullying related to gender identity.
- **Disablist:** bullying based on a child having special educational needs or disabilities.
- **Sexual:** unwelcome sexual advances, comments that intended to cause offence, humiliation, or intimidation.
- **Discriminative:** bullying based on any perceived weakness or difference. This could be because of their gender, age, race, nationality, ethnic origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, disability, or ability. It could also be factors surrounding the way someone looks or the clothes they wear, their family and social situation, hobbies, and interests.

Bullying can occur between an adult and child, children, a parent/guardian, and their own child.

Examples of bullying in sport could be:

- A parent/guardian or coach who places a child under excess pressure.
- An official who places unfair pressure on a child.
- Abuse of a person because of a high or low level of ability.

Cyber Bullying is the misuse of digital technologies or communications to bully a person or group, typically through messages or actions that are threatening and/or intended to cause offence, anxiety or humiliation.

Behaviour which is classed as cyber bullying includes:

- Abusive comments, rumours, gossip, and threats made over the internet or using other digital communications, this includes internet 'trolling'.
- Sharing pictures, videos or other personal information without the consent of the owner and with the intent to cause harm and/or humiliation.
- Hacking into someone's email, phone or online profiles to extract and share personal information or to send abusive or inappropriate content while posing as that person.
- Creating specific websites that negatively target an individual or group, typically by posting content that intends to humiliate, ostracise and/or threaten.
- Blackmail, or pressurising someone to do something online that they do not want to do, such as sending a sexually explicit image.

Financial or material harm: Relates to the theft or misuse of a person's money or property. This could include devices such as mobile phones, and the associated misuse of online accounts.

Discrimination: Occurs when someone treats a person unfairly because something about them is different. This can include unfair or less favourable treatment due to a person's race, gender, age, disability, religion, sexuality, appearance, or cultural background.

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Domestic Abuse: From March 2013 Domestic abuse was widened to include those aged 16-17 and wording changed to reflect coercive control. The Government definition of domestic violence and abuse is:

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members (Family members are: mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister & grandparents; directly related, in-laws or stepfamily) regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse:

- Psychological
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
- Emotional

Controlling behaviour is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

The Government definition, which is not currently a legal definition, includes 'honour' based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage, and is clear those victims are not confined to one gender or ethnic group.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE): a type of sexual abuse in which children are sexually exploited for money, power, or status. Children or young people may be tricked into believing they're in a loving, consensual relationship (sometimes referred to as the 'boyfriend model'). They might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol. They may also be groomed online. Some children and young people are trafficked into or within the UK for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Sexual exploitation can also happen to young people in gangs.

Child Criminal Exploitation: Child Criminal Exploitation refers to a range of activities which involve children and young people being coerced or manipulated to commit crimes. This could include, but is not limited to, being part of gang membership, or involvement in 'county lines' drug dealing. Involvement in these activities might arise due to pressure from, or recruitment by, peers; a desire to 'fit in'; promise of rewards or money; blackmail or threats; sophisticated grooming and the 'boyfriend model' referred to above.

Harassment: Defined as an act that is unwanted by the recipient. It may be through the provision of items or unwanted actions from another person. It is for any given individual to determine for themselves what is acceptable to them and what they regard as offensive, although any other individual affected by such conduct can also report the behaviour as harassment. This could mean that something which may, to the observer, appear as kindness or generosity, is perceived by the recipient as harassment. Staff or volunteers receiving a report of harassment should accept the child's perception, and should not make any judgement about the situation, as they may not know the underlying facts, or understand how the action is making the recipient feel.

Harassment can be deemed to be a criminal offence in some circumstances and can lead to the use of a restraining order or criminal prosecution.

Harassment can include:

- Suggestive or sexual remarks, racist insults or jokes, verbal abuse or use of foul language.
- Unwelcome attention or contact.
- Sending or giving unwanted gifts.

Harassment can lead to the child feeling unhappy, demoralised, or undervalued as a person. Harassment is often a constant ongoing type of abuse where the repeated nature of the action causes extreme distress.

"Faith" or "Belief" abuse: carried out on a child as a result, often, of a belief that it is a necessary act to perform on a child e.g., Witchcraft or Kandoi (predominant in central African

countries) where a child might be physically harmed by cutting/beating/water treatments, to “release” the child from spirits. This could also include honour-based violence.

Female genital mutilation: the partial or total removal of the external genitalia of female children (often known as ‘cutting’) for non-medical reasons, such as cultural practice. This practice can result in complications such as wound infection, pain, frequent urinary infections, psychological trauma, and in adulthood, sexual difficulties, and complications in childbirth. It is typically carried out in non-clinical settings by people who are not medically qualified and can result in severe bleeding and death. It is widely internationally recognised as a violation of human rights. Girls most at risk will be between infancy and adolescence and come from families who originate from Western, Eastern and North-Eastern regions of Africa (World Health Organisation).

Forced marriage: The UK government definition of forced marriage is when someone faces physical pressure to marry (for example, threats, physical violence or sexual violence) or emotional and psychological pressure (eg being made to feel like they are bringing shame on their family). Forced marriage is illegal in the UK, and this includes taking someone out of the UK to enter into a non-consensual marriage. Forced Marriage Protection Orders can be issued when it is suspected that an individual may be at risk of forced marriage. Forced marriages will frequently lead to victims also being forced into subsequent non-consensual sexual acts.

Radicalisation: The Institute of Strategic Dialogue defines radicalisation as ‘the process through which an individual change from passivity or activism, to become more revolutionary, militant or extremist, especially where there is intent towards, or support for, violence’. There is evidence of children being targeted for radicalisation, both online and in person, and being taken or encouraged to leave or within UK and join extremist organisations overseas. Further information can be found in EIH’s extremism policy.

Grooming: The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) defines grooming as “when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or trafficking”. Grooming is, however, a technique, a pattern of activity which can be used by others to engage with a child in order to perpetrate any form of abuse or exploitation.

Criminal offences specifically involving grooming include:

Causing or inciting a child under 16 years old to engage in sexual activity. It can apply where a communication with a child can be shown to have caused or incited some kind of sexual activity by the child, e.g., naked, or semi-naked posing.

Engaging in sexual communication with a child. This offence is committed when an adult, aged 18 or over, communicates with a child under 16 years old (who the adult does not reasonably believe to be 16 years old or over), if the communication is sexual or if it is intended to obtain from the child a communication which is sexual. The offence applies only when the adult can be shown to have acted for the purposes of sexual gratification.

Children, and their parents/carers can be groomed face to face or online, by a stranger or by someone they know. Groomers can be male or female and could be any age. They will hide their true intentions and may spend months or years gaining a child’s trust and in some cases the trust of the child’s family to allow them to be left alone with a child. Those who work with children may use similar tactics to gain the trust of the child and their colleagues.

Common methods used by groomers are:

- Pretending to be someone they are not (for example pretending to be a child).

- Offering advice and understanding.
- Buying gifts.
- Giving a child attention.
- Using their professional position or reputation.
- Taking them on trips, outings and holidays.
- Using online social platforms to connect with children. This enables them to easily hide their identity and learn about children from their online profiles.
- Peer to peer.

Once they have gained a child and/or family's trust, groomers may:

- Exploit that relationship by isolating the child from their family and friends so the child becomes dependent on them.
- Introduce secrets as a way of controlling or sometimes scaring the child not to tell. This can include blackmailing the child or making them feel guilty or ashamed.

GANG CULTURE

The word 'gang' means different things in different contexts, the government in their paper 'Safeguarding children and young people who may be affected by gang activity' distinguishes between peer groups, street gangs and organised criminal gangs.

Peer group -a relatively small and transient social grouping which may or may not describe themselves as a gang depending on the context.

Street gang - "groups of young people who see themselves (and are seen by others) as a discernible group for whom crime and violence is integral to the group's identity."

Organised criminal gangs -"a group of individuals for whom involvement in crime is for personal gain (financial or otherwise). For most crime is their 'occupation.'"

It's not illegal for a young person to be in a gang – there are different types of 'gangs' and not every 'gang' is criminal or dangerous. However, gang membership can be linked to illegal activity, particularly organised criminal gangs involved in trafficking, drug dealing, and violent crime and clubs should safeguard children and young people from gangs and gang activity.

Any relevant information or intelligence should always be reported to local policing teams in order to protect child and young people from harm including grooming and all forms of exploitation. Any information you hold may be critical part of a puzzle. It is not the purpose of role of the police to criminalise young people but to protect them.

GUIDANCE ON INDECENT IMAGES OF CHILDREN

Across a range of sports, it has been recognised that the ownership and usage of smart phones has increased the potential for indecent images to be taken in changing rooms being used by junior players. For this reason, the EIH's Changing Room Policy makes clear that photo-capable

devices (go-pros etc) should not be used in changing rooms and should be left with a parent or carer.

The EIH does not expect volunteers, including Club DSLs to be experts on the law surrounding indecent images, nor is it our responsibility to make decisions as to how any incidents involving indecent images should be dealt with. Therefore, all suspected indecent images must be reported to the police in the first incidence (failing to stop the distribution of child pornography is a criminal offence). All incidents must be reported to the Regional DSL for information. Volunteers should not have any concerns about the potential for young people to be unnecessarily criminalised as a result of any experimental and entirely consensual activities, as there are clear pathways for professionals to identify where this is the case and provide appropriate advice and guidance.

There is no specific legal definition of 'indecent', but offences can be committed surrounding any images of children in stages of undress.

What actions constitute offences surrounding images of children?

- Taking, making (opening, accessing, downloading, and storing), distributing (sharing or sending), uploading or possessing and indecent images of a child. This applies equally whether or not the person committing the act is under or over 18.
- Encouraging or requesting a child to take, make or distribute any such images.
- Voyeurism – observing or filming another person without their consent for sexual gratification.
- 'Upskirting' – a specific offence in which an individual operates equipment or records and image beneath a person's clothing to observe their genitalia or buttocks, whether covered or otherwise by underwear.

What are the risks?

- Images may be uploaded to social media or shared with other individuals for sexual gratification.
- Images may be used to threaten or blackmail a child into participating in unwanted sexual or criminal activity.
- Images may be used as part of a pattern of bullying or harassment.
- Once in the public domain images are virtually impossible to control.

How can risks be minimised?

- EIH policy on photo-capable equipment in changing rooms should be followed at all times.
- Volunteers should be vigilant for any use of devices which fall outside of the Policy.
- Junior players should be made aware of the Policy, and that any taking of photographs or video of fellow players could constitute a criminal offence.

How to respond to concerns involving indecent images

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- Do not confront the person suspected of taking any images unless a child is at immediate risk of harm and doing so would prevent or minimise the harm.
- Report an incident to Police immediately.
- If necessary, and only if advised by Police, two DBS checked club volunteers can request a child to hand over a device which is strongly suspected of containing indecent images. It is vital they do not get the opportunity to delete any images or data themselves.
- Do not view or show the image to anyone else. Such actions may amount to a criminal offence.
- Contact the Club DSL and Regional DSL as soon as possible and follow all standard advice for responding to and recording safeguarding concerns, including use of the Safeguarding Incident Reporting Form.

RESPONDING TO, RECORDING AND REPORTING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

The EIH recognises that Safeguarding concerns will, from time to time, be raised, whether within ice hockey activities, or relating to matters outside.

It is not the role of anyone within the EIH's Safeguarding structure to decide whether a concern or incident constitutes abuse, neglect or any criminal concern, only to report them to the appropriate authorities for professional investigation.

When a concern is raised, a three-stage process will be triggered:

Step 1: Respond to the concern, disclosure, or allegation in an appropriate manner.

Step 2: Record the information.

Step 3: Report the information to the appropriate person and/or organisations.

What might trigger a concern?

- A direct disclosure from a child.
- Observing signs or indicators of abuse, such as those detailed within this handbook.
- An allegation made against a member of staff or volunteer within the club.
- An allegation made against a member of staff or volunteer within the ice rink.
- An allegation made against a parent / guardian / carer or someone else not involved with the club.
- Any observation of inappropriate behaviour by another adult or a child.
- Any witnessed or alleged bullying (recognising that low level bullying between children can often be dealt with at club level).

- Any witnessed or alleged breaches of any of the Codes of Conduct contained within this handbook which could potentially constitute harm, abuse, or neglect.

Respond

DO:

- Remain calm.
- Reassure the person that they have done the right thing in making the disclosure.
- Listen to what is being said, taking care to remember it as precisely as possible.
- Try to avoid showing that you might be feeling upset, disgusted, or disbelieving of what is being said.
- Only ask open questions if you need to clarify what is being said.
- Inform the person making the disclosure of what actions you will do next and who else will be informed.

DON'T:

- Make promises to keep the information secret or in confidence. The young person must be aware that you will have to pass the information on.
- Make any judgements or assumptions.
- Challenge or inform the alleged abuser of the disclosure. This could place the young person in further danger.
- Ask any leading questions or make comments or suggestions.
- Take sole responsibility for dealing with the concern.
- Delay in reporting the concern to Designated Safeguarding Lead / Regional Safeguarding Lead, and to Police / Children's Services where there is any indication of a child being in immediate danger.

Record

- Record what is said, but do not probe for further details. This could jeopardise any future investigation and/or prosecution of the perpetrator. Transfer the information to the Safeguarding Incident Reporting Form as soon as possible.

Report

Staff or volunteers may feel uncomfortable about reporting concerns, fearful of causing dispute with parents/carers, or concerned that the child may be taken into care. These concerns, whilst reasonable, are not reasons to withhold information from the relevant authorities or for delay in reporting concerns.

- Contact police/children's services in the locality that the child lives immediately if the child is currently or imminently at risk of harm.

- Contact the DSLs as soon as possible and pass on the incident reporting form. Where it is certain that the child is not at immediate risk this should be within 24 hours.
- The DSL will inform parents or guardians of the child of the actions taken only if they are not implicated/involved in the concern. A parent/guardian cannot make the decision as to whether a safeguarding concern is disclosed to a statutory agency.

In an emergency

If any member of club personnel believes a child to be at immediate or imminent risk of harm, they should seek to contact the Police and inform the Designated Safeguarding lead urgently.

Record any reference number given by the Police and details of any Children's Services staff spoken to.

It is the Police who have emergency powers to protect children and remove them from their parent/carer in the first instance and should therefore be the first point of contact in an emergency.

What will happen next?

In cases where a referral has been made to statutory agencies (police, children's services, LADO) the EIH will work with those agencies to determine the appropriate steps to be taken.

The EIH's safeguarding investigation protocol will be followed, which may involve suspension of the individual whilst the matter is fully investigated.

In cases where a concern has been reported, but is determined not to be a Safeguarding matter, the club DSL or regional DSL will take any necessary steps to address the concern at a local level, for example speaking to parents, implementing anti-bullying interventions, offering awareness raising concerning specific equality issues etc.

Concerns outside the club

The EIH acknowledges that our clubs will share ice facilities with members of the public and where members of staff are employed by another organisation or business. In this context staff or volunteers may witness incidents or behaviour which raises cause for concern. They may not know the identity of the child/children involved. The concern may involve potential criminal acts, child abuse, inappropriate or concerning behaviour or parenting/guardian.

In such cases there is a responsibility to safeguard that child/children from harm, wherever possible. In the first instance the on-duty manager of the ice rink should be informed. As an individual, any adult also has a responsibility to report any emergency where you believe a child has been harmed or is at risk of imminent harm to the Police.

If the child requires emergency medical assistance call 999 for an ambulance. Ensure you make a formal record of all of the actions taken. Take the name and contact details of anyone you have spoken to.

If concerns do not relate to an emergency child protection matter but you witness or have disclosed to you matters such as poor practice, safety, supervision, or behaviour by an ice-skating coach this should be reported to the Ice Rink Manager, or to the supervising body to which the coach is registered. Make a formal record of this action and who the concern was reported to.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING

When an allegation has been made it is essential that the volunteer or staff member who has received the allegation maintains confidentiality, and that this is also maintained by the Club DSL in escalating and managing the allegation.

Information should only be shared with individuals who need to know and can help in managing the concerns. If parents/guardians are not implicated in the concern, ensure they are made aware at the earliest opportunity.

The EIH recognises that understanding what information can or can't or should or should not, be shared can be a worry for volunteers and this toolkit seeks to provide a simple guide to aid information sharing. Club DSLs can, and should, utilise the safeguarding structure to seek further advice from regional and national safeguarding leads.

Information sharing is essential for effective safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. It is a key factor identified in many serious case reviews, where poor information sharing has resulted in missed opportunities to take action that keeps children safe.

Conversely, breaches of confidentiality could put the child in danger either by further inappropriate action of an individual(s) involved or other individuals who hear about the concern through rumours or hearsay. Ultimately, any investigation to safeguard that child may be impeded by misinformation or rumours.

The most important consideration is whether sharing information is likely to support the safeguarding and protection of a child.

Matters of information sharing will also be relevant outside of safeguarding 'incidents', in situations such as a child having medical needs; personal circumstances which may be affecting the child at a given time; gender or sexuality issues. In these situations, the following guidance will assist staff and volunteers in assessing what information can legally be shared and who with. DSLs will provide advice and guidance wherever needed.

Government guidance on information sharing is contained within [Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners](#), which describes key principles for deciding what to share, the 'seven golden rules for information sharing':

- 1. Remember that the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and human rights law are not barriers** to justified information sharing but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.
- 2. Be open and honest with the individual** (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
- 3. Seek advice from other practitioners** if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.
- 4. Share with informed consent where appropriate** and, where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to having their information shared. You may still share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is lawful basis to do so, such as where safety may be at risk.

5. **Consider safety and well-being:** Base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.
6. **Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure:** Ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up to date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely.
7. **Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it** – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

Who to share information with

Once a safeguarding concern has been identified, the EIH's DSLs may need to share information with other agencies or organisations, including:

- Statutory agencies – the Police and/or children's services must be informed about child protection concerns; designated officers (LADOs) should be consulted where there are concerns about someone in a position of trust.
- Disclosure and barring service (DBS) – must be informed of any concerns about someone in regulated activity who is suspended or expelled from the organisation.
- Other clubs and other sports organisations – the principles of the seven golden rules need to inform decisions about sharing information with other organisations to enable them to safeguard children in their care who may be at risk of harm.
- Individuals within the organisation – decisions about sharing information with individuals also needs to be based on the seven golden rules guidance to determine who needs to know what information in order to keep children safe.

PRATICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Clubs should have facilities in place to store all information securely, in line with GDPR requirements.

Where information needs to be communicated verbally consideration should be given to suitable locations, to ensure, for example, that confidential information cannot be overheard, or audio recorded.

ONCERNS REGARDING A CHILD SELF HARMING

What is self-harm?

Self-harm is a term used when someone injures or harms themselves on purpose rather than by accident. This is usually a way to cope with difficult feelings or release tension. The physical pain of hurting oneself can feel like a distraction from emotional pain. Children may sometimes not know the reasons why they self-harm.

Methods of self-harming include:

- Cutting.
- Rubbing/scraping the skin with sharp objects.
- Scratching, picking, and pinching of skin.
- Biting yourself.
- Burning.
- Interfering with healing.
- Hair pulling (and then potentially hair eating).
- Hitting objects, including punching and head banging.
- Abusing drugs and alcohol.
- Poisoning or overdosing.
- Eating disorders.
- Exercising excessively.

Why do children self-harm?

The factors which trigger self-harming will differ between individuals, however common reasons for self-harming include:

- Feeling depressed, anxious, or unhappy.
- Low self-esteem or feeling like they are not good enough.
- Experiencing bullying or discrimination.
- Experiencing abuse or neglect.
- Bereavement or family difficulties.
- Concerns around sexual orientation or gender.
- Problems at school.
- Underlying mental health problems.
- Feeling angry with themselves or others, and that they need to punish themselves or others.
- Feeling that they do not have control over their lives.

What to do if a child discloses self-harm

- Try not to panic or display shock or fear.
- Be non-judgemental.
- Let the child know you will help them get support.
- Do not promise to keep the information secret. Make clear that you will have to share the information.
- Seek immediate medical treatment if there is an active injury.
- Seek advice from the club DSL at the first opportunity. It may not be appropriate to immediately disclose to the parent/carer. Self-harm may be a reaction to abuse or neglect which is taking place at home or another issue which the child is not ready to disclose to their parent/carer.
- Remember that volunteers are not trained professionals in this field and should not become involved in provision of support or counselling. Utilise the EIH's safeguarding structure for assistance.

What to do if you suspect a child is self-harming

In the event where coaches or other volunteers notice signs that may indicate self-harm, they should seek support from the club DSL. The club's DSL has access to advice from the regional DSL, who has expertise in the field of Safeguarding.

The regional DSL will look to establish the circumstances of the self-harm and make decisions as to whether the matter should be discussed with parents/carers or whether support is required from children's services. They may ask volunteers or the Club DSL to make additional enquiries on their behalf.

The volunteer and club DSL should use the safeguarding incident reporting form (section 4) to record all details of what has triggered the concern.

WHO CAN HELP

The primary route to access help will be through the child's GP, school or local authority children's services department. They will be able to make referrals to specialist mental health services for young people.

There are also a number of national organisations which can provide help and support:

Childline: 0800 1111
childline.org.uk/info-advice/yourfeelings/self-harm

YoungMinds: 0808 802 5544
youngminds.org.uk

SelfharmUK: selfharm.co.uk

Harmless: harmless.org.uk

NSPCC: 0808 800 5000
nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/childrens-mental-health/self-harm

Kooth: kooth.com

Mind: 0300 123 3393
mind.org.uk

Samaritans: 116 123 (24-hour helpline)
samaritans.org.uk

NHS Information on Self-Harm: nhs.uk/conditions/self-harm

