

**Birmingham**

**Handball Club**

**Safeguarding Policy 2022**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

**Safeguarding and Birmingham Handball Club**

**From Working Together to Safeguard Children(2018)**

*“Everyone who works with children has a responsibility for keeping them safe. No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child’s needs and circumstances and, if children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.”*

*“There are many sports clubs and organisations including voluntary and private sector providers that deliver a wide range of sporting activities to children. Some of these will be community amateur sports clubs, some will be charities. All should have the arrangements described in this chapter in place and should collaborate to work effectively with the safeguarding partners as required by any local safeguarding arrangements. Paid and volunteer staff need to be aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, how they should respond to child protection concerns and how to make a referral to local authority children’s social care or the police if necessary.”*

The welfare of children and young people is everyone’s responsibility. Everyone involved in handball – officials, coaches, volunteers, players, parents/carers, friends, family and children themselves – can help. If you have any concerns about poor or abusive practice or suspect that a child may be being abused or is at risk, please contact our Club Welfare Officer, in confidence (see safeguarding page on website).

In addition to promoting the welfare and safety of children and young people and helping to minimise the risk of child abuse, these documents provide guidance to all those involved in the sport about acceptable behaviour and good practice. They are based on England Handball’s safeguarding policy and procedures. Best practice protects everyone involved in sport. The codes of conduct have been developed to support people by helping to make it clear to all what is expected of them and others involved in handball.

We are continually trying to improve our procedures and make our documents as “user friendly” as possible. If you have any comments, please contact one of the committee members (details on the website).

**Organisation Essential Contacts:**

England Handball Association

01925 246482

[www.englandhandball.com](http://www.englandhandball.com/)

England Handball Safeguarding Lead – John Pearce safeguarding@englandhandball.com 07900244859

Childline - 0800111 (for children and young people)

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

NSPCC - 0808 8005000 (for adults concerned about a child) [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/)

CPSU - 0116 2347278 (Enquires or advice on safeguarding) [www.thecpsu.org.uk](http://www.thecpsu.org.uk/)

Thinkuknow - Online site with information for young people and adults [www.thinkuknow.org.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.org.uk/)

**Local Contacts**

Club Welfare Officer – James Cargill, birminghambisons@gmail.com, or via contacts page on website

Local Authority Designated Officer - Ladoteam@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk

Police - <https://west-midlands.police.uk/your-local-police/birmingham>

Birmingham Safeguarding Childrens Partnership - www.lscpbirmingham.org.uk

**Foreword from England Handball**

The England Handball Association (EHA) Chair and Board of Directors believe all young people involved in handball have a fundamental right to be protected so that they can enjoy the sport free from all forms of abuse and exploitation. It therefore seeks to help protect and promote the welfare of all young people in handball by having in place clear policies and guidance for its affiliated clubs and associations and all others involved in the sport.

The EHA Chair and Board of Directors view all those within handball as part of the sports family. This includes all clubs, associations, other organisations and individuals with any involvement at any level. The EHA believes that all members of the handball family have responsibilities to help protect young people. The EHA Board aims to ensure that all staff honour and understand the procedures in place. On that basis this Safeguarding and Child Protection policy has been developed to help ensure that this happens at all levels within the sport including the partners with whom the association works.

Promoting the safety and welfare of young people is a key element of the EHA Board and staff promise. Safeguarding underlines this intention as the term is wider than “Child Protection” in that it is used to incorporate staff understanding of good practice. Child protection is still an essential element of this policy and is about acting on the concerns of a young person or individual. The EHA will not discriminate against any persons and all groups or individuals have equal rights to be protected and safeguarded.

The EHAs Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy will be updated every three years or more frequently as required and in line with changes to legislation, government guidance and industry best practice.

We hope that the policy will assist your club/association as we all provide a safer environment for the future of our sport and the people involved in its delivery.

Signed

Mike Bain

CEO

England Handball Association

**Acknowledgements**

This document is based upon England Handball’s Safeguarding Polcy November 2017. This draws from the Child Protection Policy and Implementation Procedures produced by Sportscoach UK, the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit and the wider Safeguarding community in other sports NGBs.

**Abbreviations**

EHA – England Handball Association

CMG – England Handball Case Management Group CWO – Club Welfare Officer

CPSU – Child Protection in Sport Unit

DBS – Disclosure and Barring Service

LSCB – Local Safeguarding Children Board

LADO – Local Authority Safeguarding Officer

NGB – National Governing Body

NSPCC – National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children

LSO – Lead Safeguarding Officer

In December 2012, the Criminal Records Bureau CRB) merged with the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) to become known as the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

See https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service In this document the term ‘parent’ will be used but also refers to carers or guardians. ‘Staff’ refers to anyone in a paid or voluntary role in handball.

**2. POLICY STATEMENT**

This policy is mandatory for the game as a whole and provides guidelines to everyone in handball, whether working in a professional or voluntary capacity. It is recognised that child abuse is a very emotive and difficult subject; however everyone in handball has a duty of care towards children and young people and can help to protect them from abuse.

All individuals involved in handball under the jurisdiction of the EHA including players, match officials, coaches, administrators, club officials and spectators agree to abide by this policy as well as all other EHA policies. All such individuals, by participating, attending or being involved in handball, are deemed to accept and agree to these policies and as such recognise and accept their responsibility to be aware of the relevant principles and accountabilities. The policies are available through the EHA website or on request from the EHA office. A copy will be sent to all clubs, together with the accompanying Guidance documents and Templates/Forms. We recommend all clubs have a hard copy available, to ensure that anyone without Internet can access the information.

The EHA’s approach to safeguarding and child protection is based on the principles recognised within the UK and International legislation and Government guidance. The following has been taken into consideration:

* The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
* The Children Act 1989 and 2004
* The Protection of Children Act 1999
* The Every Child Matters strategy (DfES, 2004)
* Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (HM Government)
* No Secrets – Guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and

 procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse 2000

* The Human Rights Act 1998
* The Sexual Offences Act 2003
* The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
* The Data Protection Act 2018
* The Police Act 1997
* Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000
* The Protection of Freedom Act 2012
* UN Convention for the Rights of a Child (1989)
* What to do if you are worried a child is being abused 2006
* The Children and Social Work Act (2017)

**Responsibilities**

**Birmingham Handball Club is affiliated to England Handball and will:**

* Accept the moral and legal responsibility to implement procedures to provide a duty of care for young people, safeguard their wellbeing and protect them from abuse;
* Respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of young people;
* Recognise that some young people could face additional barriers to getting help because of additional vulnerabilities which could include their ethnicity, gender, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, social background or culture;
* ensure they adopt best practice to safeguard and protect young people from abuse, and to reduce the likelihood of allegations being made against themselves;
* Accept and abide by the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and the EHA Code of Ethics and Conduct as well as all other policies and procedures;
* respond appropriately to any complaints about poor practice or allegations of abuse.

**Principles**

The guidance given in this policy is based on the following principles:

**The child’s welfare is paramount;**

* A child is recognised as being under the age of 18 years (Children Act 1989 definition);
* All young people, regardless of any personal characteristic including their age, gender, ability, any disability they may have, culture, racial origin, religious belief and sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse;
* An adult has a moral and statutory duty for the care, custody and control of any person under the age of 18 under their supervision;
* All incidents of poor practice or suspicions of poor practice and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately;
* All young people have a right to play the game of handball in an enjoyable and safe environment;
* Young people have a right to expect appropriate support in accordance with their personal and social development with regard to their involvement in the game of handball;
* It is the responsibility of the child protection experts and agencies to determine whether or not abuse has taken place but it is everyone’s responsibility to report any concerns.

Working in partnership with children, their parents and other agencies is essential

for safeguarding; the EHA recognises the statutory responsibilities of the appropriate bodies such as Children’s Social Care Services, the Police, the Local Authority Designated Officers (LADO) and the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) to ensure the welfare of children.

All those involved in the management of young players in handball have a duty to ensure they are:

* Allowed access to the game in a way that is appropriate for their age and ability;
* Coached and trained by appropriately qualified people
* Not required to play in too many games, or to attend training sessions, as to become a threat to their well-being
* Not subjected to verbal or racial abuse from any source, especially from the bench and spectator gallery, including references to height, weight etc.
* Not subjected to bullying, threats or undue pressure from any source
* Encouraged to achieve their full potential at all levels
* Instructed on how to behave, both on and off the court
* Afforded respect and value in a playing and training situation and any other handball environment

**Equality**

All people have the same rights to be safeguarded from abuse but it should be recognised that some children may face additional vulnerabilities and extra barriers to getting help. This could be because of their personal characteristics such as race, gender, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, social background or culture. There should be awareness that these characteristics may mean that they are at greater risk of abuse because of factors such as prejudice, discrimination, reduced ability to resist or report abuse, communication barriers or myths based on stereotypes.

**3. PROMOTING GOOD PRACTICE**

Child abuse, particularly sexual abuse, can generate strong emotions in those having to deal with such an allegation. It is important to understand these feelings and not allow them to interfere with your judgement about what action to take. Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school and the sporting environment. Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with young people in order to harm them.

A teacher, coach or club volunteer may have regular contact with young people and be an important link in identifying cases where protection is needed. All concerns about poor practice or alleged abuse should be reported following the guidelines in Section 5 of this document. When a person enters a club having been subjected to abuse outside the sporting environment, sport can play a crucial role in improving the person’s self-esteem. In such instances the club must work with the appropriate agencies to ensure the young person receives the required support.

All personnel should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect young people and to protect themselves from allegations. The relevant sections of the EHA Code of Ethics and Conduct should be studied. In addition, the following are common sense examples of good practice and how to create a positive culture when working in handball:

* Always putting the welfare of each young person first, before winning or achieving goals;
* Always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging an open environment with no secrets)
* Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers young people to share in the decision-making process
* Making sport fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play
* Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism; treating all young people equally and with respect and dignity
* Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance both emotionally and physically (e.g. it is not appropriate for an adult to have an intimate relationship with a young person or vulnerable adult or to share a room with them)
* Keeping up to date with the technical skills, qualifications and insurance in sport;  ensuring that if mixed teams are taken away, they should always be accompanied by male and female staff
* Ensuring that at tournaments or residential events, adults should not enter a child’s room or invite children into their rooms unless in an emergency.
* If an adult is working in a supervisory capacity, they should only enter a child’s room when accompanied by another adult
* Being an excellent role model - this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol whilst supervising children and promoting a healthy diet
* Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of children – avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will;
* Securing parental consent in writing to act in loco parentis, if the need arises to give permission for the administration of emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment;
* Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given, which is then reported to the parents at the first opportunity.

**Appropriately qualified and vetted staff**

We will ensure that all people working or volunteering with children are appropriately vetted. South Birmingham Handball Club (SBHC) will develop a safe recruitment process based on the EHA guidance to include:

* Checking documents to confirm the person’s identity,
* Obtaining references and conducting an interview if possible.
* For all roles, which are eligible, an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check (previously known as a CRB disclosure) should be completed.

All those working with children will be appropriately experienced or mentored/supervised until they have gained experience. We will ensure that all volunteers undertake regular safeguarding training to refresh and update their knowledge. Coaches working with children will hold appropriate coaching qualifications and must be proactive in safeguarding by taking responsibility for familiarising themselves with any relevant guidance, policies or procedures.

All coaches of junior teams who are eligible for a DBS check must hold a valid and satisfactory DBS check of the appropriate level and type. When there is content on the disclosure, we will undertake a risk assessment regarding the disclosure and will refer the matter to the EHA. It is the individual’s responsibility to send their DBS to the EHA when requested. Failure to do so within the specified period may lead to a temporary suspension of that individual.

**Coaching ratios**

Coaches working with young people should not work in isolation. We will ensure the correct level of supervision from a health and safety point of view, so that coaches reduce the risk of injury to players and ensure adequate cover remains in case of an emergency. At least one other adult in addition to the head coach should be present at every session to supervise. The additional adults do not need to be qualified coaches as long as the ratio of coaches: players are met. Participants aged under 17 will not be included in staffing ratios even if they have coaching qualifications.

The level of supervision will take account of:

* The ability and experience of the players;
* The age and any disabilities or special requirements of any of the young people;
* The activity being undertaken;
* The geography of the facilities being used (i.e. restricted access to sports hall or outdoor court);
* The ‘risk assessment’ of the activity and facility. When working with groups of children under 8 years of age government guidance states clearly that there should be one supervising adult for every 6 children (Care Standards Act 2000).
* When working with young people aged over 8 years old the ideal coaching ratio is one coach for every 8 -12 players. If there is an accident or an incident, which may mean a member of staff, has to leave, you should ensure that there are enough people remaining to supervise the group. Therefore there must always be at least two adults present.

A person cannot become a qualified Level 1 coach until they are 16 years old, and it is expected that the person leading the session will be ideally Level 2 qualified (for which you have to be 18 years old). Young people can become involved in coaching but they should be assisting qualified coaches and not delivering sessions until they are appropriately qualified.

**Parents as supervisors**

Parents will be encouraged to accompany their children to activities, but they will not be included in supervision calculations, unless they are members of the club and acting in a volunteering role or other capacity during the activity. In these circumstances, they should meet all appropriate requirements in terms of;

* Appropriate background checks;
* Clarity about their role and responsibilities;
* Who has overall responsibility for the group;
* What is acceptable practice.

**Relationships of trust**

“The inequality at the heart of a relationship of trust should be ended before any sexual relationship begins.”

*Caring for Young people and the Vulnerable, Guidance for preventing abuse of trust (Home Office, 1999).*

This statement recognises that genuine relationships can occur between the different levels of participants in a group. However appropriate boundaries should be upheld, especially when one person is aged under 18 or a vulnerable adult. Those working/volunteering in a position of authority with children under 18 years of age are considered to be in a ‘position of trust’ and therefore should be careful to ensure that the appropriate boundaries remain in the relationship. The power and influence that a member of staff or volunteer such as a coach has over someone attending a group or activity cannot be under-estimated. If there is an additional competitive aspect to the activity and one person is responsible for the other’s success or failure to some extent, then the dependency will be increased. It is therefore vital for people to recognise the responsibility they must exercise in ensuring that they could not be considered to have abused their position of trust.

Although children aged over 16 years can legally consent to sexual activity, it is inappropriate and extremely poor practice for an adult to pursue a relationship with a young person with whom they are in a position of trust. In some cases an ‘abuse of trust’ is a criminal offence (Sexual Offences Act 2003 - UK wide). Whilst the coach- player relationship exists, coaches should not enter into an intimate relationship with players aged under 18 years old, and should be aware that in some cases, such as if they have met through a school team, a relationship could be considered inappropriate or criminal by the statutory agencies. This would also be a breach of the EHA Codes of Ethics and Conduct and a basis for disciplinary action.

All those in a position of trust should be aware that sending messages or images deemed inappropriate and/or sexually provocative by text, email, web-cam or other electronic media to children under 18 years of age is a breach of this policy and may be a criminal offence.

**Photography**

The EHA is committed to ensuring young people are protected from the inappropriate use of their images. No images should be taken at junior games, training or events without the necessary consent being obtained first including on how the images will be used, especially if this is on websites and in other publications. Registration for the club includes request for consent from parents/adults for the taking of photography.

There is also a need to ensure the opposition have obtained consent from parents and are then able to give consent for images to be taken.

There is no intention to prevent coaches using videoing as a legitimate coaching aid, but players and their parents should be aware that this is part of the coaching programme and informed consent should be gained in writing, with care taken in the storing of such images.

Please see the accompanying photography guidance and templates for further information.

**Changing rooms**

Where practical, children will be supervised at all times in the changing rooms by two members of staff. Adult staff should not change or shower at the same time using the same facility as players. Staff of the opposite gender should not be present whilst players are showering or changing. For mixed gender teams, separate facilities should be made available.

If a young person is uncomfortable changing or showering in public, no pressure will be placed on them to do so and they will be encouraged to do this at home. If SBHC has children with disabilities, we will involve them and their parents in deciding how they should be assisted and ensure they are able to consent to the assistance that is offered. Club members must avoid taking on the responsibility for tasks for which they are not appropriately trained.

All club members should be aware that no photographic equipment (including cameras, video cameras, and mobile phones) should be used in the changing room environment.

**Late collection**

SBHC is clear that it is our responsibility to transport children home on behalf of parents who have been delayed. In such cases we will:

* Publicise a staff contact number for parents to phone if there is any likelihood of late collection.
* Enable a message to be left for Coaches, who may not be able to answer their phone during training/games.
* Ask all parents to provide an alternative contact name and number to be used if they can’t be reached on their usual numbers.

In cases of late collection, staff will:

* Attempt to contact the child's parent on their contact numbers;
* Use the alternative contact name/number if possible;
* Wait with the child at the sport facility, with other staff or parents present if possible;
* Remind parents of the policy relating to late collection.

In cases of late collection, SBHC staff will not:

* Take the child home or to any other location without speaking to their parents
* Send the child home with another person without permission from a parent
* Leave the child on their own
* Ask the child to wait in a vehicle or sport facility with you alone.

**Elite athletes**

Talented players need to be exposed to appropriate competition and training in order to achieve their potential and allow their talent to develop. This may involve young people competing against older players, including adults. The EHA currently do not permit players under 16 years old to compete in any EHA open age competitions and we will discuss the appropriate level of competition and training with both the player and their parents/ guardians.

Elite athletes may be additionally vulnerable due to increased time spent training and competing compared to other young people. Consideration needs to be given not only to the physical risks because of shortened recovery times, but also to the potential impact on the young person’s education as well as the emotional and social impact on them and their family.

The EHA have established an AASE (Advanced Apprenticeship in Sporting Excellence) programme to run alongside their Talent Pathway for junior players. There is an AASE Manager in place who has responsibility for ensuring the welfare of the young people who are selected for this programme, as well as a Performance Manager and administration support.

**4. RECOGNITION OF POOR PRACTICE AND POSSIBLE ABUSE**

SBHC recognises that we have a responsibility to act if we have any concerns about the behaviour of someone (an adult or young person) towards a child and to follow the reporting procedures in this document.

**Poor practice**

Allegations may relate to poor practice where an adult’s or another young person’s behaviour is inappropriate and may be causing concern/harm to a child.

In the application of this policy, poor practice includes any behaviour bringing the game into disrepute of a child protection nature or contravening any SBHC, EHA policy or guidance, infringing an individuals’ rights and/or is a failure to fulfil the highest standards of care.

Examples of poor practice never to be sanctioned include:

* Using excessive, physical or humiliating punishments;
* Failing to act when you witness possible abuse or bullying;
* Being unaware of or breaching any EHA policy such as the Code of Ethics and Conduct;
* Spending excessive amounts of time alone with young people away from others;
* Inviting or allowing young people into your home where they will be alone with you;
* Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative activity, including horseplay;
* Allowing or engage in any form of inappropriate touching;
* Allowing young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged;
* Making sexually suggestive comments even in fun;
* Reducing a person to tears as a form of control;
* Allowing allegations made by a young person to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon;
* Doing things of a personal nature for young people that they can do for themselves;
* Sharing a bedroom with a young person you are not related to, even with parental permission.

N.B. It may sometimes be necessary for staff or volunteers to do things of apersonal nature for young people, particularly if they are very young or are disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parents and the players involved. Staff, volunteers or other participants should avoid taking on the responsibility for tasks for which they are not appropriately trained.

If any of the following incidents should occur, you should report them immediately to another colleague and/or the Club Welfare Office and make a written note of the event. Parents should also be informed of the incident.

This includes:

* If you accidentally hurt a player;
* If he/she seems distressed in any manner;
* If a player appears to be sexually aroused by your actions;
* If a player misunderstands or misinterprets something you have said or done.

**Abuse**

Somebody may abuse a young person by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Young people may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those

known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.

The effects of abuse can be extremely damaging and if untreated, they may follow a person into adulthood. For example, a person who has been abused as a child may find it difficult or impossible to maintain stable, trusting relationships, become involved with drugs or prostitution or attempt suicide.

Indications that a young person may be being abused include the following:

* Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries;
* An injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent;
* the young person describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her;
* Someone else (a young person or adult) expresses concern about the welfare of another;
* Unexplained changes in behaviour (e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper);
* Inappropriate sexual awareness;
* Engaging in sexually explicit behaviour;
* Distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected;
* Has difficulty in making friends;
* Is prevented from socialising with other young people;
* Displays variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite;
* Sudden weight change;
* Becomes increasingly dirty or unkempt.

**Remember it is not the responsibility of those working in handball to decide if child**

**abuse is occurring but it is their responsibility to act on any concerns by reporting them.**

**Additional vulnerabilities**

Deaf or disabled children have the same rights to protection as any child but they could be more vulnerable to abuse because they may be dependent on others for practical assistance and intimate care as well as have impaired capacity to resist, avoid, understand or report abuse.

Although the great majority of carers have the child's best interests at heart, some will use their vulnerability as an opportunity to abuse. Sometimes it may be difficult to tell that a disabled child is being abused as people might think a child is behaving differently because of his or her disability - not realising that they are being abused.

**Electronic communication**

An adult should not contact a young person under 18 years of age through electronic media (including but not limited to social media, emails and text messages) where they know that young person through handball, *other than* for legitimate handball participation or administration related reasons. All contact should be:

* Professional and avoid over-familiarity
* Never contain any offensive, abusive or inappropriate language or images
* Not sent overnight (between midnight and 6 am)

Inappropriate contact may be considered grooming which could be reported to the statutory services and possibly lead to disciplinary action including suspension.

**5. REPORTING PROCEDURES**

Three procedures are explained in this policy, one for reporting concerns within handball and another for concerns outside of handball. If you are unsure which applies, please contact a helpline or the EHA Lead Safeguarding Officer for advice.

**How to respond to a disclosure from a child**

If you witness or become concerned about someone’s behaviour, or someone tells you they or another person is being or has been abused you **should:**

Think **TED:**

**TELL**

**EXPLAIN**

**DESCRIBE**

* React calmly so as not to frighten or deter the disclosure;
* Listen carefully and take what they say seriously;
* Keep any questions to the absolute minimum and for clarification only, avaoiding leading questions;
* Tell them they are not to blame and that they are right to tell;
* Reassure them and explain you have to share what they have said;
* Report the concerns but not decide if abuse has taken place;
* Make a record of everything said and any actions taken as soon as possible;

If you think the situation is an emergency, contact the Club Welfare Officer or the EHA’s Lead Safeguarding Officer. ***WHEREVER POSSIBLE, you should contact the Club Welfare Officer, or Club Secretary, so that they can make the referral to Children’s Social Care***. Always try to contact a committee member before taking any other action. If they are not immediately available then you should contact your local Children’s Social Care, LADO or Police without delay. Expert advice can also be provided by the NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000, 24 hours of the day. Contact information for local social services and statutory agencies can be found on the Birmingham SCB website, or via the Local Authority.

**Actions to avoid**

The person receiving the disclosure **should not:**

* Panic or allow their shock to show
* **Ask questions other than to clarify that you have enough information to act**
* Speculate or make assumptions
* Make promises or agree to keep secrets
* Make negative comments about the alleged abuser
* Approach or talk to the alleged abuser
* Discuss the allegations with anyone who does not have a need to know
* Take sole responsibility
* Delay in reporting the concerns

It should be noted that not all young players are able to express themselves verbally. Communication difficulties may mean that it is hard for them to explain or be understood. Sometimes it is difficult to distinguish the signs of abuse from the symptoms of some disabilities or conditions, in relation to the nature of an individual’s impairment. However, the welfare of the child is paramount and where there are concerns about the safety of a young player, record what has been observed in detail and follow the procedures to report these concerns.

**Records and Information**

Information passed to the Children’s Social Care or the Police must be as helpful and comprehensive as possible, hence the necessity for making a detailed record at the time of the disclosure/concern. Ideally this information should be compiled utilising the Incident Referral Form, which is included in the accompanying Templates and Forms section.

Information, which may be required at the referral stage:

**Young person**

Name/age/gender/address/ethnicity and details of any disabilities Details of parents and any agencies already working with the family

**Accused**

* Relationship between them and accused
* Name/age/gender/address
* Position in sport/occupation
* Any other allegations/previous incidents

**Primary evidence**

* Facts from the person making the allegation including dates/times/venue/witness details;
* Records with dates, including any documents such as emails;
* Has anyone else been informed or is anyone else already involved in the investigation.

Reporting the matter to the Police or Children’s Social Care department should not be delayed by attempts to obtain more information. Wherever possible, referrals telephoned to Children’s Social Care should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours.

Details of whom the concerns were passed to should also be recorded, including the name and title of the Children’s Social Care member of staff or Police officer, as well as the time and date of the call in case any follow up is needed.

A copy of this information should also be sent directly to the EHA Lead Safeguarding Officer and a copy should be retained by the Club Welfare Officer and stored in a secure place.

**Confidentiality**

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained with information shared on a ‘need to know basis’ only. This includes but is not limited to the following people:

* The Club Welfare Officer, or other member of the Committee;
* The parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused **(but only following**

 **advice from Children’s Social Care)**;

* Children’s Social Care/Police;
* The EHA Lead Safeguarding Officer and members of the EHA Case Management

 Group (CMG), Safeguarding Disciplinary Group (SDG) and Safeguarding Appeals

 Group (SAG).

* The alleged abuser (and parents if the alleged abuser is a young person) **following** **advice from Children’s Social Care.**

Information should be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws (e.g. that information is accurate, relevant and secure).

The seven golden rules of information sharing are:

* **Remember that the Data Protection Act/GDPR is not a barrier to sharing information** but provides a framework to ensure that personalinformation about living persons is shared appropriately.
* **Be open and honest** with the person (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared. Seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
* **Seek advice** if you are in any doubt, without disclosing the identity of theperson where possible.
* **Share with consent where appropriate** and, where possible, respectthe wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. You may still share information without consent if, in your judgement, that lack of consent can be overridden in the public interest. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case.
* **Consider safety and well-being.** Base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the person, and others who may be affected by their decisions.
* **Necessary, proportionate, relevant, 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 people who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion and is shared securely.
* **Keep a record** of your decision and the reasons for it–whether it is to be shared or not. If you decide to share, record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

**Procedures**

It is acknowledged that the suggestion that a child has/is being abused can evoke strong emotions. It can be very difficult to hear suspicions or allegations but it is important that concerns are acted on. There are different procedures set out for reporting concerns about behaviour within handball and another for concerns outside of handball.

**It is not for you to decide if abuse has taken place but to report the concerns.** It is helpful if an incident referral form is completed as this sets outthe sort of information, which is useful. Wherever possible this should be completed by the Club Welfare Officer. Please see the Templates/Forms for the EHA Incident referral Form template. You should be careful to report as much detail as possible but avoid hearsay or assumptions. The alleged perpetrator will need to be informed of the specific allegation to give them the opportunity to respond, but only after advice from statutory agencies.

The EHA Case Management Group (CMG) will decide if it is appropriate and/or possible to protect the identity of the complainant, although it should be noted that in some cases this may be apparent or necessary. If a complainant is particularly concerned about their name being disclosed this should be discussed when making the referral. Where possible, those who have provided information will be informed about the progress and conclusion of the investigation.

**Suspension**

In order to ensure the safety and welfare of anyone involved in handball, the Case Management Group (CMG) may decide to take the neutral act of temporarily suspending an individual (also known as imposing a Temporary Suspension Order) for such duration and on such terms as considered to be appropriate.

The Safeguarding Disciplinary Group (SDG) who will review the information and confirm any action deemed necessary will receive recommendations.

A Temporary Suspension Order may be imposed due to:

* Receipt of serious allegations
* Notification that an individual is subject to an investigation by the Police, Social Care or any other authority in relation to an allegation or offence
* Receipt of information, which suggests a person may pose a risk of harm.
* Failure to comply with any aspect of England Handball’s vetting procedures.
* This list is not intended to be exhaustive.

Following any statutory services (e.g. Children’s Social Care or Police) investigation, the EHA will assess the available information to decide whether the individual can be reinstated to their role in handball. This may be a difficult decision; particularly where there is insufficient evidence for the statutory services to act or obtain a conviction. In such cases, the CMG or SDG will reach a decision based upon the available information, which could suggest that on a balance of probability; it is more likely than not that the person poses a risk. Anyone suspended on a permanent basis must be referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service for consideration to appear on the appropriate Barred List.

The CMG may decide that an individual should undertake certain actions such as further training or completing a new DBS disclosure, with failure to comply resulting in suspension on such terms and for such period as stipulated.

**Appeals**

An individual, club or affiliated association who is subject to a disciplinary sanction or final outcome made by the CMG or SDG has the right to appeal. Appeals are heard and considered by the Safeguarding Appeals Group (SAG)

Anyone wishing to appeal must do so in writing, to be received by the EHA Lead Safeguarding Officer within the specified period (usually 14 days unless stated differently) of the notification being sent. The letter of appeal should set out clearly the grounds for the appeal.

An individual may appeal in writing against their temporary suspension within the specified period (usually 14 days unless stated differently). The original terms of any temporary suspension will continue to apply during the appeal process. All members of the SAG will not have been a member of the CMG or Safeguarding Disciplinary Group which considered the case. The SAG may ratify the original outcome, vary or dismiss it with their decision being final and binding.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

During and following the conclusion of a case, members of the CMG will evaluate if changes need to be made to policies, procedures or guidance documents. All involved in a case are able to offer feedback so lessons can be learnt and safeguarding processes can be continually improved.

**Support to Deal with the Aftermath**

Consideration should be given about what support may be appropriate to young people and others effected such as parents and members of staff. Use of helplines, support groups and meetings will maintain an open culture and help the healing process. Thought should be given about what support may be appropriate to the alleged perpetrator of the abuse. See the list of Essential Contacts on Page 4 of this Policy for expert organisations.

**What to do if you have concerns about the behaviour of anyone in handball**

**Action to take regarding allegations outside handball**

**Allegations of previous abuse**

Allegations of abuse may be made some time after the event (e.g. by an adult who was abused as a young person but felt unable to say anything at the time). Where such an allegation is made, the club must follow the reporting procedures because other children, either within or outside sport, may still be at risk from the alleged perpetrator.

**Handball in Schools**

When delivering activities in a school or directly under the supervision/management of school staff, the school’s arrangements for child protection will apply. You must inform the designated teacher or person for that school, who will follow the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures. You should also ensure that you inform your Club Welfare Officer who will need to make the EHA LSO aware of the situation.

**The subject of allegations outside handball**

If a person with a role in handball is the subject of relevant allegations outside of the handball environment, for example through their job as a teacher, the EHA may still be informed by the statutory services even if the allegations do not directly involve handball. This is to ensure that the welfare of young people remains the paramount concern. An individual may be suspended from their role in handball whilst the investigation is conducted – this should be seen as a neutral act to protect all involved.

If a young person informs you directly that he/she is being abused or describes abusive behaviour outside the handball environment (i.e. at home or some other setting outside of handball) OR through your own observations or through a third party you become aware of possible abuse outside the handball environment you must **REACT IMMEDIATELY.**

* Ensure the safety of the young person - if they need immediate medical treatment, take them to hospital or call an ambulance, inform doctors of concerns and ensure they are aware it is a child protection issue;
* if possible, contact the SBHC Club Welfare Officer or Committee member, or the EHA Lead Safeguarding Officer immediately, who will follow the reporting procedures detailed below. If either of these individuals is unavailable or cannot be contacted, to avoid delay the person that has concerns should follow the procedures set out below.

**Reporting Procedures**

* Seek advice immediately from the local Children’s Social Care or Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) who will advise on the action to be taken, including advice on discussing with parents. Expert advice can also be provided by the NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000 or Childline on 0800 1111;
* Make a full and factual record of events utilising the Incident Referral Form and forward a copy of the recorded information, as directed by the Children’s Social Care and/or Police, and also to the EHA Lead Safeguarding Officer. If not already involved, contact the Club Welfare Officer as soon as possible.

**General Complaints and Feedback to Birmingham Handball Club**

We are committed to ensuring that all our members and customers receive the best possible service. However we recognise that, sometimes, some of our members and customers experience problems.

We also recognise that complaints are a valuable form of feedback on our service delivery. We use this feedback to identify the root causes of complaints and to ensure that improvements are made to our processes for the benefit of both our customers and ourselves.

These are the promises we make to all members and other stakeholders who raise issues with us:

* We will listen to you, and make every effort to understand the reasons for your complaint,
* We will endeavour to resolve your problem at your first point of contact,
* We will take ownership of your complaint to ensure resolution, and
* We will offer fair solutions quickly.

We also welcome positive feedback from stakeholders about our services and members.

**Informal procedures**

We will aim to resolve your problem in an informal manner and as quickly as possible. For any complaint about South Birmingham Handball Club, members or volunteers, please contact southbrumhc@virginmedia.com

If your complaint cannot be dealt with immediately, or if the matter you are concerned about is very serious, you should use our formal complaints procedure.

**Formal procedures**

Wherever possible, complaints should be resolved by informal means. Where they have not been resolved, complaints regarding the behaviour of members should be submitted in writing to the Secretary.

The Management Committee will meet to hear complaints within 14 days of a complaint being lodged. The Committee has the power to take appropriate disciplinary action, including the termination of membership. The outcome of a disciplinary hearing should be notified in writing to the person who lodged the complaint and the member against whom the complaint was made, within 14 days of the hearing.

There will be the right of appeal to the Management Committee following disciplinary action being announced. Any appeal should be received in writing by the Club Secretary no later than 7 days after the disciplinary hearing. The committee should consider the appeal within 14 days of the Secretary receiving the appeal.

**6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

It is never easy to respond to a child who tells you that they are being abused and you may feel upset and worried yourself. Where serious concerns exist over an individual’s contact with children or a Police investigation is being conducted, ‘Strategy meetings’ may be held. Membership of this might include the Police, Children’s Social Care, a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), health workers and the person’s employers. If the allegations of abuse involve handball or someone who could have contact with young people through handball, it is possible that the Club Welfare Officer or EHA would be invited to attend.

**Club Welfare Officer (CWO)**

The Club Welfare Officer is the person appointed at club level and provides the essential point of contact for welfare within SBHC. The CWO will be selected for their skills and knowledge, such as being able to handle matters of a safeguarding nature in an appropriate and confidential manner. They should be approachable for any concerns regarding safeguarding to be reported and be appropriately supported by other members of the club.

Along with the club committee, the CWO will ensure that the club is adopting and implementing safeguarding. Clubs are advised to ideally have two CWOs, with at least one not holding a coaching position or being related to a coach at the club.

**England Handball Lead Safeguarding Officer (LSO)**

Every NGB should designate a person to promote the welfare of children within the sport. The role includes managing the DBS process, co-ordinating the dissemination of relevant policy, procedures & resources as well as supporting CWOs in their roles. The Lead Safeguarding Officer also provides administrative support for the Case Management Group as well as managing the administration of cases of poor practice/abuse within the sport. This includes being the central point of contact for enquiries such as from the complainants, LADO, Children’s Social Care and the Police. The LSO will also submit reports to the EHA Board for each Board meeting, and prepare and review the annual Safeguarding Training Strategy and Training Needs Analysis.

**England Handball Case Management Group (CMG)**

The purpose of the Case Management Group is to ensure all decisions relating to safeguarding children are reached following a fair, open and transparent process. The group comprises a minimum of three people, including the EHA Lead Safeguarding Officer and a senior manager with the exact membership determined by the nature of the case and availability of members. The group may call upon whatever professional input they feel is required.

**Statutory Agencies**

Children’s Social Care have a duty to ensure the welfare of children and a legal responsibility to make enquiries where a child in their area is considered to be at risk of, or actually suffering from, significant harm. Where an allegation relates to a crime against a child, the Police and Children’s Social Care will work together to investigate. Usually the LADO is involved throughout to ensure information is shared with those who need to know.

**Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**

The LADO works within Children’s Services and will be involved in coordinating information sharing in cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children (including as a volunteer) has:

* behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child
* possibly committed a criminal offence against children, or related to a child   behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

Where someone has concerns relating to anyone who holds a position of trust or responsibility with young people, these should be discussed with the LADO.

**Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB)**

Every local authority has a LSCB that is designed to ensure all agencies involved in safeguarding children work together effectively. They provide local inter-agency guidelines for the procedures that should be followed in cases of actual or suspected child abuse. The Children and Social Work Act (2017) replaces LSCB with Safeguarding Partners. Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) clarifies the roles and responsibilities of Safeguarding Partners.