



Child Wellbeing & Protection in Squash Guidance for Clubs

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This pack is a collection of good practice guidelines and templates that your club can use to help promote children's wellbeing and help to keep them safe in sport. It is regularly reviewed and incorporates any new and updated child wellbeing and protection guidance and legislation. In this document a child or young person is defined as someone under the age of 18.

In order to ensure your club is a safe environment for children and young people it is recommended that all sections of this pack are implemented whether using your existing policies or the templates provided.

The pack is written with Sports Clubs in mind. It provides guidance and support for staff and volunteers working with children in sports clubs and any member of staff or volunteer taking on the role of Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer (CWPO). It should be read in conjunction with other relevant policies and procedures.

You can use it:

- in its entirety or select only the relevant sections
- to look at what is already in place at your club – to confirm the positives and or identify any gaps
- to develop policies and procedures - templates can be used as is or changed to suit your club's needs

Throughout this guidance we will refer to the sports volunteers/staff. By this we mean anyone involved in the delivery of the sport for example paid or unpaid staff including volunteer coaches, parent helpers, officials etc.

Further Support

Further guidance and support is available from your governing body Lead Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer, Morva McKenzie, and the Children 1st Safeguarding in Sport Service.

If you have an immediate and serious concern about the safety of a child, contact the police and/or social work child protection team. Contact details of social work can be found on the relevant local authority website.

Club Child Wellbeing & Protection Policy

Your club must have a child wellbeing and protection policy statement and related procedures and guidance that are adopted at the highest level, such as the club's organising committee. They should be clearly communicated to the children and their parents/carers. It is recommended that you issue a clear statement of intent so that everyone understands the club's position on promoting the wellbeing of the children involved in its activities. Please see appendix for a template of Child Protection Policy Statement. (1)

CLEAR ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

All squash clubs within Scottish Squash are encouraged to appoint a Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer (CWPO) and another person who can support the CWPO and deputise in their absence. The CWPO should be the main point of contact and make it easy for everyone to know who to go to if they need:

- support
- advice
- training
- to report a concern

The CWPO, with the support of the organising committee, will 'champion' good practice and make sure club policies and procedures are put in place. Contact details and the role of the CWPO should be widely and easily accessible and understood by the sports volunteers/staff, children and carers. During periods when the CWPO is unavailable it must be clear who the designated deputy for child wellbeing and protection is in their absence.

Please see appendix for job description of Child wellbeing and protection officer, (2).

SAFE RECRUITMENT

A well-run recruitment process is part of the club's commitment to putting the protection and wellbeing of children first. Many jobs are done by volunteers who have been recruited informally. If a job involves working with children, the club has a legal and moral responsibility to ensure that the person appointed is suitable. The checklist below gives essential steps to make sure the club meets its duty.

A checklist for appointment is included in appendix, (3)

PVG Explained

Your club has a legal duty, under the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) 2007 Act, to make sure that the adults who are authorised to work or volunteer with children on behalf of the club are not on the Children's List. The Children's List is a list of individuals who have been barred from working with children by Disclosure Scotland.

The person/s in the club who are responsible for making the decisions about appointments and for managing the sports volunteers/staff should be clearly identified. The Club Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer will play an important advisory role in relation to appointments to work with children, but will not usually be responsible for the final decision about appointments. All clubs have been sent out guidance on the PVG Scheme and this document is also available on the Scottish Squash website. It is worth pointing out at this stage that it is a common misunderstanding that a club will be contacted by Disclosure Scotland in the event of any new information becoming available about a PVG Scheme Member. This is not the case. A club will only be informed by Disclosure Scotland if any relevant new information becomes available about a member of the sports volunteers/staff. For example a club will be contacted if the individual is being considered for listing because they have

received a conviction for harming a child, but they will not be contacted if the PVG Scheme Member receives a dangerous driving conviction. This should be borne in mind for clubs using employees/volunteers for transporting children to training and events. In this case a PVG update should be undertaken annually.

When a PVG Scheme Member leaves

If a PVG Scheme member is no longer in regulated work with children on behalf of the club, Disclosure Scotland should be notified. Should a member of the sports volunteers/staff not be in contact for three months or more, inform Disclosure Scotland that the individual is no longer in regulated work with children.

Existing PVG Scheme Members

If the person you want to appoint to a position of regulated work is already a PVG scheme member, you should request a 'Scheme Record Update' from Disclosure Scotland. This will register the club's connection to and interest in this person and provide you with any relevant updated information since the application was made.

Self-declaration

This informs the club of previous convictions or investigations that might be relevant when taking an employment decision. Self-declaration forms should be completed anytime an individual applies for a PVG membership or Scheme Record Update. This step in the recruitment process has important legal implications. For more information please review the Safeguarding in Sport Self Declaration Briefing Paper: http://www.children1st.org.uk/media/4265/sgb_self_dec_briefing_paper_jan_2016.pdf

References

Always request and check 2 references. At least one reference should be from a role that involved working with children. References from relatives are not acceptable. These can be verbal or written. Record verbal references - who the reference was from and what was said.

Induction & Training

When a new post holder starts at the club the Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer should:

- agree what training they need (e.g. safeguarding and protecting children) and when it should be done by
- explain the child protection policy and procedures, including the code of conduct
- get written agreement to abide by Child Protection and Wellbeing policies and the Code of Conduct for working with children

Trial period

It is recommended that the club and any new members of the sports volunteers/staff agree a trial period to make sure that the role is a good fit for both.

Monitoring and Performance review

The club should monitor the performance of the individual doing regulated work. This gives an opportunity to check on progress and address any problems or concerns.

See Appendix (4) for information on PVG which may be useful to share with people who you are considering to do regulated work with children at your club.

See Appendix (5) for Self Declaration Form for staff/volunteers undertaking work with children.

CODES OF CONDUCT

A code of conduct for working with children is used to make clear:

- what behaviour is acceptable and unacceptable
- the standards of practise expected when working on behalf of the club
- the basis for challenging and improving practise

Everyone working with children on behalf of your club should sign up to your club's code of conduct. Members of the sports volunteers/staff must be clear about the expectations on them when involved in activities with children. Children and the parents/carers involved in activities should also be clear about what they can expect from the adults working with them. The club's code of conduct is most useful if shared publicly and widely.

The sports volunteers/staff, children and parents/carers support and understand codes of conduct best when they are involved in drawing them up and have the opportunity to discuss regularly what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.

Concerns about breach of the code of conduct should be taken seriously and responded to in line with the complaints policy, performance management policy, disciplinary procedure and/or procedures for responding to concerns.

Code of conduct for parents/carers and children

Children and their parents/carers should also be clear about the expectations placed upon them.

It can be very beneficial to ask children as a group to discuss this in their group/team and to agree what the consequences of breaking these rules should be. This could be done at the start of a season, before a trip away from home, or as part of a welcome session at a residential camp.

Good spectator behaviour is important

Pressure on children and the bad behaviour of adults on the side-line can make children drop out of sport. Clubs should promote good side-line behaviour and make it clear that if children or officials are abused, action will be taken.

Further guidance and support is available from your child protection officer, Morva McKenzie, at Scottish Squash,

T: 0131 451 8525

E: Child.Protection@scottishsquash.org

and the Children 1st Safeguarding in Sport Service:

T: 0141 419 1156

E: safeguardingsport.org.uk

W: www.safeguardingsport.org.uk

See Appendix (6) for Code of Conduct for Working with Children

See Appendix (7) for Player Code of Conduct

SAFE IN SPORT – GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES

This club has a *duty of care* towards all children involved in its activities. Although it is not possible to give guidance for all possible circumstances, the Good Practice Guidelines are based on best practice and cover some of the most common situations. They apply to all young people under the age of 18, but common sense should be applied when considering the circumstances of older children.

ADULT TO CHILD RATIOS

As a general guide a ratio of 1:10 is recommended in the National Care Standards for children 8 – 16 years, see also Guidelines on Away Trips on the Scottish Squash website.

Activities should be planned to involve at least two adults, preferably one male and one female. As a general guide, the following factors will also be taken into consideration in deciding how many adults are required to safely supervise children:

- The number of children involved in the activity
- The age, maturity and experience of the children
- Whether any of the group leaders or children has a disability or special requirements
- Whether any of the children have challenging behaviour
- The particular hazards associated with the activity
- The particular hazards associated with the environment
- The level of qualification and experience of the leaders
- The programme of activities
- Whether there are volunteers under the age 18

FIRST AID AND THE TREATMENT OF INJURIES

Parents/carers must complete a *Partnership with Parents/Carers Form*, see appendix (8) before their child participates in sport. This ensures that sports volunteers/staff running an event or activity are made aware of any pre-existing medical conditions, or medicines being taken by participants or existing injuries and treatment required.

- Have an accessible and well-resourced first aid kit and a working telephone at the venue.
- Where possible, access to medical advice and/or assistance should be made available.

- Only those with a current, recognised First Aid qualification should treat injuries.
- Inform parents/carers as soon as possible of any injury and action taken.
- A *Concern Recording Form* see appendix, (9) should be completed if a child sustains a significant injury and the details of any treatment given recorded. Good sense or sport specific guidance should be used to determine which injuries are significant.
- The circumstances of any accidents that occur should be recorded and reviewed to avoid it happening again.

VOLUNTEERS AGED 17 OR UNDER

While some children under the age of 16 may be in 'regulated work' with children they should not be placed in positions of sole responsibility for other children. They should be supervised by a more senior qualified coach or volunteer who has been appropriately vetted.

Volunteers aged 17 and under should be assessed for their suitability to work with children. There is no lower age limit for PVG membership. Where the post meets the 'regulated work' criteria, membership of the PVG Scheme should be considered.

Young volunteers may come under different pressures (e.g. lack of respect from peers) and closeness in age could lead to the development of friendships or romantic/sexual relationships. Regular supervision, training and extra support is recommended. Supervision ratios should also be reassessed, as a young volunteer may not be as capable of overseeing a group of children and young people as an adult in the same position.

PHYSICAL CONTACT

Any necessary physical contact during sport sessions should respect and be sensitive to the needs and wishes of the child and should take place in a culture of dignity and respect. Children should be encouraged to speak out if they feel uncomfortable.

Demonstrating a Technique

In the first instance, techniques should be delivered by demonstration (either by the coach or an athlete who can display the technique safely).

If physical contact is necessary, for example to provide support, this should be clearly explained to the child in advance and he/she should be given the chance to opt out. Physical support should be provided openly and must always be proportionate to the circumstances.

SEXUAL ACTIVITY & GROOMING

Within sport intimate relationships can occur. This section looks at both sexual activity among young people and that between adults and young people.

A person in a legally defined 'position of trust' who takes advantage of their position to develop an intimate relationship with a child/young person may be committing a criminal offence known as 'abuse of trust'. Sports coaching is not currently defined in law as a 'position of trust', but the principle of the law should be followed and captured in your club's policies.

The notion of 'positions of trust' applies as much to young people in leadership roles as it does to adults.

Young people

Sexual activity between children/young people at team events, in sports facilities and at social activities organised by the club should be discouraged.

Criminal sexual behaviour committed by a young person should be referred to the police or social services. This may also lead to disciplinary action in accordance with the sport and club's disciplinary procedure.

For more information see the National Guidance on 'Under-age Sexual Activity: Meeting the Needs of Children and Young People and Identifying Child Protection Concerns': <http://www.gov.scot/resource/doc/333495/0108880.pdf>

Adults

Sexual activity between adults and children under the age of 16 is illegal and must be reported to the police.

Sexual activity between adults and young people (aged 16+) involved in sport raise serious issues given the power imbalance in the relationship. Even if a young person is of the age of consent, the power of the adult over that young person may influence their ability to genuinely consent to sexual activity. For example, a coach may have significant power or influence over a young person's sporting career.

Sexual activity between adults and young people (16+) involved in sport should therefore be prohibited when the adult is in a position of trust or authority (coach, trainer, official). This should be communicated clearly to adults in such positions at the outset and clear procedures drawn up to deal with such a situation promptly, fairly and consistently.

Grooming

Most adults involved in sport with children participate with the aim of providing a fun and positive experience for the children taking part. However, some may use sport as a way of gaining access to children with the purpose of developing inappropriate intimate relationships.

People who commit sexual offences against children often first gain the trust of people around the child, such as their family and friends and those involved in sport. Those who commit offences work hard to portray themselves as caring and trustworthy and they befriend their victims to break down barriers before an offence may be committed.

This is referred to as 'grooming'. This predatory behaviour is an offence and may be prosecuted separately to direct sexual abuse. Any suspicions of grooming should be reported to police.

MANAGING CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR

Planning

Sessions should be planned around the group and take into consideration the needs of each child. Sports volunteers/staff should consider previous and likely behaviour. There should be strategies to manage risks agreed in advance. This should identify the appropriate number of adults required to manage and support the session safely, including being able to respond adequately to safeguard the group.

From time to time sports volunteers/staff delivering sport to children may have to deal with challenging behaviour.

The following principles should be applied:

- The wellbeing of all children is the paramount consideration.
- Children must never be subject to any form of treatment that is harmful, abusive, humiliating or degrading and should always be able to maintain their respect and dignity.
- No member of staff should attempt to respond to challenging behaviour by using techniques for which they have not been trained.

None of the following should be used as a means of managing a child's behaviour:

- Physical punishment or the threat of such.
- Withdrawal of communication.
- Being deprived of food, water or access to changing facilities or toilets.
- Verbal intimidation, ridicule or humiliation.

Physical Interventions

Physical interventions should only be used as a last resort to prevent a child from injuring themselves or others or causing serious damage to property. **Only the minimum force needed to avert injury to a person or serious damage to property should be used and applied for the shortest period of time.** Physical intervention must not ever be used as a form of punishment.

TRANSPORTING CHILDREN

Clubs do not generally take responsibility for the transport of players to and from venues. If the club does expressly accept responsibility for travel arrangements, it should undertake a risk assessment including the following areas:

- All vehicles and drivers are correctly insured.
- The driver has a valid and appropriate license.
- All reasonable safety measures are available e.g. fitted, working seatbelts or booster seats.
- There is an appropriate ratio of adults per child.
- Drivers take adequate breaks.
- If an adult is regularly transporting children on behalf of the club this may be regulated work with children as such it should be assessed whether or not this person requires a PVG check

Sports volunteers/staff should be discouraged from transporting children to activities by car. However, when this situation cannot be avoided the following guidelines should be followed:

- Request parent/carer consent in advance and provide details of the journey.
- Take all reasonable safety measures e.g. children in the back seat, seatbelts worn.
- Where possible, have another adult accompany you on the journey.

COLLECTION BY PARENTS/CARERS

Make sure that start and finish times are clear and that the arrangements for collection are understood by all. Parents/carers who wish children to go home unaccompanied (according to their age and stage) should give consent in writing. Notify parents/carers that they should not drop children off too early and that they are expected to collect children promptly. Explain late collection procedures.

Have a late collection telephone contact and number on the *Partnership with Parents/Carers Form*, appendix (8) and let the parent/carer know how to contact the club if they are held up.

Dealing with the situation

If parents/carers are late when picking up their child, the wellbeing of the child will take precedence, and he/she must not be left alone. The leaders and coaches have a duty of care to the children in their charge and this continues when the activity has finished. However, it is not the responsibility of staff/volunteers to transport children home. If attempts to contact an adult who is responsible for the child fail, the CWPO and social work should be informed.

Where possible have more than one adult/leader to lock up at the end of an activity. If an adult is left in sole charge in these circumstances, they should record any actions taken and inform the CWPO and parents/carers as soon as possible.

TRIPS AWAY FROM HOME (INVOLVING OVERNIGHT STAYS)

See Appendix (10), also available as separate document on Scottish Squash Website

PROCEDURE FOR THE USE OF PHOTOGRAPHS, FILM, VIDEO

Children must be protected from those who would seek to use photos and videos to place them at risk of harm.

Written consent must be obtained from the child's parents/carers before any photography or filming takes place.

MANAGEMENT OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Reasonable steps must be taken to promote the safe use of photography and filming at events and activities. It is not possible to prevent individuals photographing or filming in public places, but the club does have the right to prohibit the use of photography, film or video at its own events or activities at a private venue.

Where photography or filming is permitted, (and consent has been granted from parents/carers), the following guidelines should be followed:

- Put a system in place to allow easy tracking of photographers and their equipment. For example use a badge or sticker to identify those with permission to photograph or film.
- Children must never be portrayed in a demeaning, tasteless or a provocative manner. Children should never be shown in a state of partial undress, other than when depicting an action shot within the context of the sport. Attire such as tracksuits or t-shirts may be more appropriate.
- No unsupervised access or one-to-one sessions will be allowed unless this has been explicitly agreed with the child and parents/carers.
- Decisions about publishing images should reflect the best interests of the child and should consider whether they might place the child at risk. Special care must be taken in relation to vulnerable children such as those in care, fleeing domestic violence or a child with a disability.
- All negatives, copies of videos and digital images will be stored in a secure place. These will not be kept for any longer than is necessary having regard to the purposes for which they were taken.
- Indecent images of young people under 18 years of age are classified as child abuse imagery and must be reported immediately to the police.

MOBILE PHONE CAMERAS

A number of children have been placed at risk as a result of the ability to discreetly record and transmit images through mobile phones. Particular care is required in areas where personal privacy is important e.g. changing rooms, bathrooms and sleeping quarters. No photographs or filming should ever be permitted in such areas.

CONCERNS

Anyone behaving in a way which could reasonably be viewed as inappropriate in relation to filming or photographing should be reported to the Club Child Wellbeing & Protection Officer, or the police.

COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY & SOCIAL MEDIA

Communication technology and social media developments advance extremely quickly, meaning ways in which we communicate and receive and absorb information are changing all the time. This provides a great opportunity for clubs to promote their activities and communicate easily with members. But it can also put children and young people at considerable risk, which is why safeguards must be put in place.

Adults who seek to harm children have been known to use technology and social media to “groom” children. This area is now specifically addressed by the Protection of Children and Prevention of Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2005. It is also widely acknowledged that children can be harmed by the behaviours and actions of their peers for example, on-line bullying and sexting.

The following guidelines should be met in order to safeguard all parties when communicating using texting/social media:

- all communications from the club with children should be open, transparent and appropriate
- messages should only be sent to communicate details of meeting points, training, match details, competition results etc. The same message should be sent to every member of the group/team
- it should always be clear that it is the club who is communicating information – one-to-one messaging arrangements between sports volunteers/staff should be strongly discouraged and safeguards should be in place and settings adjusted to prevent this happening
- messages should never contain any offensive, abusive or inappropriate language. They should not be open to misinterpretation
- written permission must be sought from parents/carers to communicate with children under 16 years via technology/social media
- parents should be offered the option to be copied in to any messages their child will be sent
- consent to communicate via technology/social media should be sought directly from young people aged 16 to 18. Though consent from parents/carers is not required for this age group it is recommended that parents/carers are informed of the intention to communicate with their children
- children and young people should be informed about the means of communication at the club. They should also be given information on how to keep themselves safe and who to report any concerns to in the [Club’s Name]
- All concerns about the inappropriate use of technology and social media will be dealt with in line with the Procedure for *Responding to Concerns about a Child*. This may include the concerns being reported to police
- All phone numbers/email addresses of children and young people should be recorded and kept securely in a locked cabinet or password-protected electronic file or database
- The number of people with access to children and young people’s details should be kept to a practical minimum. A record should be kept of their numbers/addresses by the Club Child Wellbeing & Protection Officer

For more information on the Social Media Policy within Scottish Squash please see website.

Use of Images and Information

- Information published on the websites/social networking sites must never include personal information that could identify a child e.g. home address, email address, telephone number of a child. All contact must be directed to [Club Name]. Credit for achievements by a child should be restricted to first names e.g. Tracey was Player of the Year 2002.

- Children must never be portrayed in a demeaning, tasteless or a provocative manner. Children should never be portrayed in a state of partial undress, other than when depicting an action shot within the context of the sport. Attire such as tracksuits or t-shirts may be more appropriate.
- Information about specific events or meetings e.g. coaching sessions must not be distributed to any individuals other than to those directly concerned.

CLUBHOUSES AND CHANGING ROOMS

Children are particularly vulnerable in the changing area of sports facilities

Bullying can occur where children are left unsupervised in changing areas. It is recommended that particular attention is given to the supervision of children aged 10 and under in changing rooms.

Adults should avoid changing or showering at the same time as children. If limited changing facilities mean that adults and children must share, adults must take care to protect the modesty and privacy of themselves and the children. Parents/carers should be made aware if this is likely to be the case.

An adult should not be alone with a child in the changing areas. If possible more than one adult should supervise changing areas. Extra vigilance may also be required if there is public access to the venue.

If children are uncomfortable changing or showering in public, do not pressure them to do so.

If you need to use a changing room for another purpose, such as a team talk, wait until all children are fully dressed.

No photography or filming should be allowed in changing areas.

SUPPORT AND TRAINING FOR ADULTS WORKING WITH CHILDREN

Any adult who regularly works with children in sport may be the person that a child chooses to tell about abuse, or other things that are worrying them. It is vital that adults know how to respond and know how to share information with those who can help.

Those people working with or making decisions about children should be suitably trained, qualified and supported. They should:

- Know the contact name and details of the Club Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer (CWPO)
- Have signed the code of conduct for working with children
- Know and understand the good practice guidelines
- Know and understand the responding to concerns procedures
- Be aware of other relevant policies
- Attend *Safeguarding & Protecting Children in Sport*, (or another basic child protection awareness workshop) within 1 year of commencing work with children and young players

Consider the roles at the club that need specific training and the type of training required. Attendance by individuals holding the positions with responsibility for children should be recorded carefully to keep skills and knowledge up to date.

A set procedure for responding to a wellbeing or protection concern about a child makes sure that everyone is clear on what action to take in the event of a concern being raised. The procedure is based on three steps: Respond, Record, Report.

The following principles underpin the procedure:

- The wellbeing of the child is the paramount consideration.
- Parents/carers have the primary responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of their children and where possible the club should work in partnership with parents/carers when there are concerns about a child.
- Children have the right to say what they think in all matters affecting them and to have their views taken seriously (Article 12, UNCRC). It is important therefore to seek the views of the child, where relevant and appropriate, and to seek their consent for further reporting of the concern.
- Where the concern about a child's wellbeing suggests that they are in need of protection, the information must be passed on to police/social work with or without the child's consent for the purposes of their protection. Allegations of abuse must always be taken seriously. **No member of the club shall investigate allegations of abuse or decide whether or not a child has been abused.**

WHAT TO DO IF THERE IS A WELLBEING CONCERN ABOUT A CHILD

Members of the sports volunteers/staff may be informed in different ways with regards to details of a concern about a child. This may be:

- a direct disclosure by a child
- through observation of a child, demonstrated by a change in their behaviour, appearance or nature
- information that is shared from another individual or organisation

Respond

Any wellbeing concern about a child should be considered in line with the GIRFEC wellbeing indicators (Getting It Right For Every Child, Scottish Government approach to child wellbeing) and may be discussed with parents/carers. For example, if a child seems withdrawn, he/she may have experienced an upset in the family, such as a parental separation, divorce or bereavement.

Common sense is advised in these situations and the best interests of the child will be considered as to what is the best support for each individual child. Children will be asked who they feel is suitable to be informed and when relevant, consent should be gained from the child.

Record

Make a written record of the wellbeing concern as soon as possible using the *Concern Recording Form*, completing as much of the form as possible.

Report

All wellbeing concerns should be reported to the Club Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer as soon as possible. The CWPO may escalate the concern to the child's school or to police/social work if this is considered appropriate.

WHAT TO DO IF A CHILD DISCLOSES ABUSE

RESPOND

Good practice:

- React calmly so as not to frighten the child.
- Consider what requirements a child may need to communicate effectively (e.g. do they have an additional support needs, is English their first language etc.).
- Listen to the child and take what they say seriously. Do not show disbelief.
- Reassure the child they are not to blame and were right to tell someone.
- Avoid asking any questions. If necessary only ask enough questions to gain basic information to establish the possibility that abuse may have occurred. Only use open-ended, non-leading questions e.g. Who? What? Where? When?
- It's important to explain to the child who you may need to share information with and why. Don't promise to keep information to yourself.
- Do not introduce personal information from either your own experiences or those of other children.
- Pass on the information to the Club Wellbeing and Protection Officer/or social work services or the police without delay

Avoid:

- Panicking
- Showing shock or distaste
- Probing for more information than is offered
- Speculating or making assumptions
- Approach the individual against whom the allegation has been made
- Making negative comments about the person against whom the allegation has been made

RECORD

Make a written record of the information as soon as possible using the Concern Recording Form, completing as much of the form as possible

REPORT

Advise the Club Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer as quickly as possible. This should not be delayed by gathering information to complete all sections of the form. The information in the form will help the Club CWPO, police and social workers to decide what action to take next.

For advice and guidance when/if the Club CWPO is unavailable, or when an immediate response is required, contact the police and social work services directly. Record any advice.

Sharing Concerns with Parents/Carers

Where there are concerns that the parents/carers may be responsible for, or have knowledge of, the abuse sharing concerns with the parents/carers may place the child at further risk. In such cases advice must always firstly be sought from the police or social work services as to when and who should inform the parents/carers.

Further guidance and support is available from your child protection officer, Morva McKenzie, at Scottish Squash,
T: 0131 451 8525
E: Child.Protection@scottishsquash.org

and the Children 1st Safeguarding in Sport Service:
T: 0141 419 1156
E: safeguardingsport.org.uk
W: www.safeguardingsport.org.uk

RESPONDING TO CONCERNS ABOUT THE CONDUCT OF AN ADULT

In all cases where there are concerns about the conduct of an adult towards a child, the best interests and wellbeing of the child will be the paramount consideration. These procedures aim to ensure that all concerns about the conduct of an adult are dealt with in a timely, appropriate and proportionate manner. No member of the club in receipt of information that causes concern about the conduct of an adult towards children shall keep that information to himself or herself, or attempt to deal with the matter on their own.

At any point in responding to concerns about the conduct of an adult, advice may be sought from the police or social work services.

If the club is notified that a member of staff is under consideration for listing by Disclosure Scotland, a precautionary suspension should be put in place pending the outcome. A suspension is not a form of disciplinary action.

Initial Reporting of Concerns

Any concerns for the wellbeing of a child arising from the conduct of an adult must be reported to the Club Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer on the day the concern arises, as soon as practically possible.

Where the concern is about the Club Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer, concerns should be reported to the Chief Executive /Chair of the Board or similar senior figure and Scottish Squash.

Record

Make a written record of the information as soon as possible using the *Concern Recording Form, appendix (9)* completing as much of the form as possible.

Report

Advise the Club Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer as quickly as possible. This should not be delayed by gathering information to complete all sections of the form. The information in the form will help the Club CWPO to decide what action to take next.

For advice and guidance when/if the Club CWPO is unavailable, or when an immediate response is required, contact the CWPO's designated deputy.

Actions taken and reasons for decisions shall be recorded (in the order in which they happen) on the *Concern Recording Form*. This should be signed and dated by the Club Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer or the person appointed to manage the response process.

1. Establish the Basic Facts

Once the concerns have been reported, the Club Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer, or the person appointed to manage the response process will:

- Establish the basic facts
- Conduct an initial assessment of the facts in order to determine the appropriate course of action
- Consult external agencies such as the police and social work services for advice at any time. This is important because they may hold other important information which, when considered alongside the current concerns, builds a significant picture of concern.

2. Conduct an Initial Assessment

The purpose of the initial assessment is to clarify the nature and context of the concerns. It should determine if the adult's conduct was inappropriate behaviour, serious poor practice/misconduct or whether there is reasonable cause to suspect an adult's behaviour and conduct has been criminal. Every situation is unique so guidance cannot be prescriptive.

- Where the established facts support a concern of criminal behaviour, the initial assessment will not form part of the disciplinary investigation
- Subject to the nature and seriousness of the situation, if it is not clear at this stage whether a criminal offence may have been committed, the member of staff/volunteer *may* be approached as part of the information gathering process.
- Where the nature and seriousness of the information suggests that a criminal offence *may* have been committed, or that to assess the facts may jeopardise evidence, advice will be sought from the police before the adult is approached.
- An initial assessment of the basic facts may require the need to ask a child some basic, open-ended, non-leading questions solely with a view to clarifying the basic facts. It may also be necessary to ask similar basic questions of other children, or other appropriate individuals.
- Interviewing children about possible abuse and criminal offences is the sole remit of specially trained police officers and social workers. Questioning of children by those conducting an initial assessment should always be avoided as far as possible. If it is necessary to speak to the child in order to clarify the basic facts, best practice suggests that consent is obtained from a parent/carer.

Possible outcomes of initial assessment:

- (i) No further action (facts do not substantiate complaint)
- (ii) Situation is dealt with under Club Disciplinary Procedures
- (iii) Child Protection investigation (jointly by police and social work services)
- (iv) Criminal investigation (by the police). The results of a criminal investigation may well influence the disciplinary investigation, but not in all cases
- (v) Civil proceedings (by the child/family who raised the concern)

Initial assessment supports concerns about poor practice and/or misconduct

In the event of an investigation into the conduct of a member of the sports volunteers/staff, all actions will be informed by the principles of natural justice:

- They will be made aware of the nature of the concern
- They will be given an opportunity to put forward their case
- The club will act in good faith, ensuring the matter is dealt with impartially and as quickly as possible in the circumstances

Any impact on a child's wellbeing caused by an adult's poor practice/or misconduct will be managed under the club's disciplinary policy. Pending the outcome of an investigation, precautionary suspension will be considered in all cases where there is a significant concern about the conduct of an adult towards a child.

Where the circumstances meet the referral criteria set out in the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007, the sport has a **legal duty** to make a referral to Disclosure Scotland. For assistance and advice please contact Scottish Squash

T: 0131 451 8525

E: Child.Protection@scottishsquash.org

Initial assessment supports concerns about possible criminal behaviour

If the initial assessment gives reasonable cause to suspect an adult's behaviour has been a criminal offence, the Club Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer (CWPO) will report the concerns to the police as soon as possible on the day the information is received.

Referrals to the police will be confirmed in writing by the Club CWPO within 24 hours. A copy of the Concern Recording Form will be provided to the police on request.

Appropriate steps will be taken to ensure the safety of the child(ren) who may be at risk. The parents/carers of the child(ren) involved will be informed as soon as possible following advice from the police.

Advice will firstly be obtained from the police about informing the adult involved in the concerns. If the advice is to inform them, they will be told that information has been received which may suggest an allegation of abuse or possible criminal offence. As the matter will be sub judice (i.e. under judicial consideration) no details will be given unless advised by the police. All actions will ensure the best evidence is preserved for any criminal proceedings while at the same time safeguarding the rights of the adult.

Precautionary Suspension

In line with the club's disciplinary policy the adult involved may be suspended whilst an investigation is carried out. The adult will be informed in writing of the reason for the suspension. Suspension is not a form of disciplinary action.

Any disciplinary action taken must not jeopardise an ongoing criminal investigation. The police should be asked for advice. The initial assessment will not form part of the disciplinary investigation.

Non-recent Allegations of Abuse

Allegations of abuse may be made some time after the event e.g. an adult who was abused as a child by someone who is still currently working with children. The same procedures will be followed in the event of an allegation of non-recent abuse. For further guidance please refer to the 'Responding to Adult Disclosures of Childhood Sexual Abuse' briefing paper at: <http://www.children1st.org.uk/what-we-do/how-we-help/safeguarding-in-sport/safeguarding-in-sport-resources/>.

Media

All media enquiries relating to the conduct of a member the sports volunteers/staff should be referred to the club's nominated representative – e.g. Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer/chief executive. It is advisable to seek support from the Child Protection Officer at Scottish Squash.

Appendix (12) shows a flowchart for responding to concerns about the conduct of an adult.

Any serious breach of the code of conduct should be dealt with under the club's disciplinary procedure. Where child abuse is alleged or suspected the matter must be handed over to the police for investigation.

Special considerations – the involvement of children in disciplinary procedures

In establishing the facts of any concern or complaint, it may be necessary to speak to a child who was involved in the alleged incident. Consideration should be given to the following:

- consent from the parents/ carer
- age, gender and background of the child
- support required from a relative or other responsible adult (not involved in the case)
- any assistance needed to communicate
- emotional state
- timing and location to accommodate the child's daily routines
- what will happen if the child becomes upset
- other information that may be relevant
- creating a setting that is not intimidating
- only those who need to be there should be present whilst speaking to the child
- questions should be clear and non-threatening

If the nature of the concerns suggests a criminal offence has occurred or that a child may have been abused, then it is the job of specially trained and competent police officers and social workers to interview the child.

Making a referral to the children's list

When disciplinary action is taken against someone in regulated work as a result of harmful behaviour towards a child, the club has a legal duty to refer the member of staff/volunteer to Disclosure Scotland so that consideration can be given to whether that individual should be barred from any kind of regulated work with children.

A referral must be made if the member of staff/volunteer:

- has been dismissed.
- would have been dismissed as a result of the incident had they not resigned, retired or been made redundant.
- has been transferred to a position that is not regulated work with children.
- would have been dismissed or considered for dismissal where employment or volunteer role was not due to end at the expiry of a fixed term contract; or,
- would have been dismissed or considered for dismissal had the contract not expired.

It is an offence NOT to refer an individual when the criteria have been met. For detailed guidance on this see <https://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk/protectionservices/referralprocess.htm>

And contact Child.Protection@scotishsquash.org

CASE REVIEWS

Reviewing how child wellbeing and protection concerns have been managed is an important part of good practice and risk management. It provides an opportunity to identify specific areas of risk, trends or patterns and to:

- Explore if policies and procedures were followed and were effective
- Establish whether appropriate action was taken
- Examine the role of individuals involved in responding to and managing the case to establish whether further support or training is required
- Review how well the club worked with other organisations involved in the case
- Identify if any changes are required or recommendations for the future
- Identify specific areas of risk, trends or patterns
- Increase the confidence of those involved in the club by demonstrating an open and transparent approach

Clubs should conduct a review

- At the conclusion of any case dealt with through the procedures for responding to concerns
- At the conclusion of legal proceedings where the club has been involved in the investigation
- At the conclusion of disciplinary proceedings, including an appeal
- As part of the regular review of all child wellbeing and protection cases

Appendix (13) is a Case Review Matrix & Planning Template

In all matters of Child Welfare and Protection please contact Morva McKenzie, Child Protection Officer at Scottish Squash for advice and guidance on **0131 451 8525** or Child.Protection@scottishsquash.org