



SAFEGUARDING & PROTECTING CHILDREN IN SPORT

POLICY & PROCEDURES

**Reviewed annually by Senior Management
Last reviewed August 2023**

Signed  _____

Jason O'Connor (Managing Director)

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CHILDREN IN SPORT

Sport can and does have a very powerful and positive influence on people – especially young people. Not only can it provide opportunities for enjoyment and achievement, it can also develop valuable qualities such as self-esteem, leadership and teamwork. However, these positive effects can only take place if sport is in the right hands – in the hands of those who place the welfare of all young people first and adopt practices that support, protect and empower them.

The reality is that abuse does take place in sport and in some cases coaches and other trusted adults in sport have been convicted. Every adult has a legal and moral responsibility to protect young people and vulnerable adults in sport from abuse.

It is essential that systems are in place to ensure that staff recruitment, induction and education takes safeguarding issues into consideration. It is also important that coaches and other staff are in a position to recognise and respond to signs of abuse outside of the sporting context.

In addition, all those involved in sport are in a unique position to recognize and act on concerns about children’s welfare that may also arise away from the sport context.

Adopting best practice will help to safeguard young people and vulnerable adults from potential abuse as well as reducing the likelihood of allegations being made against coaches and other adults in positions of responsibility.

The Elms Sport In Schools (ESS) recognises that we all have a duty of care towards young and vulnerable performers and can help to protect them from poor practice and abuse.

Our policy took effect from October 2009, and is formally reviewed every 12 months or sooner.

Important Contacts

Role	Organisation	Name	Contact Details
DSL	Sport in Schools Ltd	Jason O’Connor	jason@theelms.co.uk
Deputy DSL	Sport in Schools Ltd	Marc Weatherstone	marc@theelms.co.uk
LADO	Harrow Safeguarding	Rosalind South	07871 987254 rosalind.south@harrow.gov.uk



The Children Act (1989) is the key piece of legislation governing child protection in England and Wales. The Children's Act (2004) supplemented the 1989 Act and reinforced the message that all organisations working with children have a duty in helping safeguard and promote the welfare of the children.

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) offers statutory guidance on inter-agency working in child protection.

National Professional Standards & Regulatory bodies include for example The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health, The Association of Police and Crime Commissioners and Ofsted; each offer competencies for professional conduct and/or measures against which standards for safeguarding arrangements are assessed.

Local Safeguarding Partners

A safeguarding partner in relation to a local authority area in England is defined under The Children Act 2004 (as amended by The Children and Social Work Act 2017) as:

- (a) The Local Authority
- (b) A Clinical Commissioning Group for an area any part of which falls within the Local Authority area
- (c) The Chief Officer of Police for an area any part of which falls within the local authority area

Organisational Policy & Procedure should offer a clear set of guidelines to make sure your organisation deals with child protection concerns effectively.

- **All staff read and understand Part 1 and Annex B of KCSIE**
- **All staff sign a declaration affirming they have covered the ESS Safeguarding Policy, which is reviewed annually.**

[Please click here to read the KCSIE](#)

The Children Act 1989

Principles

- 1 **Paramount** - The child's welfare is paramount – the most important consideration.
- 2 **Parental Responsibility** - Parents have a duty to care for their child and meet their needs
- 3 **Partnership** - Professionals and families are to work together for the welfare of children
- 4 **Participation** - Children's wishes and feelings should be ascertained so that they can contribute appropriately
- 5 **Prevention & Provision of Services** - Services may be necessary to safeguard and promote the welfare of a **'Child in Need'**
- 6 **Protection** - A child must be protected from serious harm. The Local Authority has a duty to investigate any report that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer **'Significant Harm'**

Section 17 – Child in Need

Under The Children Act (1989) a child is considered to be in need if:

- He or she is unlikely to achieve or maintain or to have the opportunity to achieve or maintain, a reasonable standard of health or development without provision of services from the Local Authority
- His or her health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision of such services; or
- He or she is a disabled child

Section 47 – Child at Risk of Significant/In Need of Protection

Places a statutory duty on The Local Authority:

Where a Local Authority have reasonable cause to suspect that a child who lives, or is found, in their area is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, the authority shall make, or cause to be made, such enquiries as they consider necessary to enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare.

Significant Harm

- Harm means ill-treatment or the impairment of health or development, including, for example impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
- Development means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development
- Ill treatment includes physical & sexual abuse and forms of ill treatment which are not physical

Who are We?

The Elms Sport in Schools (ESS)

ESS is recognised as playing a lead role in providing sports coaching within a school environment.

The policy and procedures outlined in this document are designed to cover all aspects of our work with young people and relates to all staff employed by ESS for the programmes over which it has supervision and control.

The Policy outlines a set of principles which are intended to guide decisions and actions, and which reflect agreed practice about *how* staff should work with children.

The reporting Procedures are the specific actions that need to be taken in the event of an allegation, disclosure or suspicion about the welfare of a child.

The good practice Guidance provides contextual information and addresses specific areas of work within sport.

The contents of this document have been developed from, and are consistent with:

- relevant law, regulation and statutory and non statutory government guidance
- current best practice as identified by the **NSPCC** (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children) **CPSU** (Child Protection in Sport Unit) and **LADO** (Local Authority Designated Officer)

POLICY

Policy Statement

ESS is committed to promoting and delivering best practice when working with children.

Principles

The information given in this document is based on the following principles:

- the welfare and safety of children is the primary concern
- all children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse
- it is the responsibility of the child protection professionals to determine whether or not abuse has taken place, but it is everyone's responsibility to report any concerns
- all incidents of suspected poor practice and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- confidentiality should be upheld in line with the GDPR (May 2018) and any implementing national legislation. For full details please see our Data Protection Act.
- all children have a right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect

Operational Responsibilities

ESS will:

- accept the moral and legal responsibility to provide a duty of care to protect and safeguard the wellbeing of children engaged in any activity over which it has supervision and control
- respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of children
- undertake recruitment procedures that take account of the need to protect children and include arrangements for appropriate checks on new staff and volunteers, in accordance with Elms Sport in Schools recruitment practice
- train and supervise its employees to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect young people from abuse, and reduce the likelihood of allegations of abuse against themselves
- require all staff to adopt and abide by this Policy, all implementation procedures, and the Code of Ethics and Conduct
- respond to any allegations and concerns appropriately and implement the appropriate disciplinary and appeals procedures, in accordance with ESS disciplinary procedures

- promote a culture that ensures that all children are listened to and respected as individuals
- ensure that parents, children and staff are provided with information about this policy, what it does, and what they can expect from ESS
- ensure that parents, children, staff and volunteers are provided with clear procedures to voice their concerns or lodge complaints if they feel unsure or unhappy about anything
- maintain confidentiality and ensure information is shared as appropriate with school staff in all cases involving safeguarding, in line with current legislation
- lead on the production, monitoring and review of this policy and procedures

Strategic Responsibilities

ESS will encourage, support and assist schools to develop and implement safeguarding policy and procedures.

All ESS staff have a role to play in ensuring that the organisation's strategic responsibilities are upheld.

Role Of Senior Management Team

ESS Senior Management Team will:

- oversee arrangements to ensure the organisation fulfils its 'duty of care' towards children
- contribute to the development and implementation of policies for the safeguarding and protection of children in sport
- develop, maintain and review other organisational policies and procedures which contribute to safeguarding children, including those related to safe recruitment, complaints and disciplinary procedures
- work collaboratively with external agencies on cases of serious poor practice or abuse
- implement an organisational culture of listening to children as reflected in organisational plans and practices

ESS Safeguarding Contacts

The following are ESS Designated Safeguarding Contacts:

Designated Safeguarding Officer:

Jason O'Connor jason@theelms.co.uk

Deputy Safeguarding Officer:

Marc Weatherstone marc@theelms.co.uk

All can also be contacted by telephone: 020 8954 8787.

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Officer is to:

- lead the development and establishment of ESS' approach to safeguarding children
- lead responsibility for dealing with any concerns about the protection of children
- work to maintain, develop and review policies and procedures to safeguard children in line with national guidance
- advise staff on implementation of organisational policies and procedures
- advise on ESS safeguarding training needs and development of its training strategy
- support those working with children to respond appropriately to concerns about children's welfare or safety
- represent ESS approach to safeguarding and protecting children and communicate this approach to schools.
- effectively communicate with schools regarding specific concerns about a child
- co-ordinate dissemination of policy, procedures and resources throughout ESS as appropriate
- direct individuals to sources of support during and following an incident, allegation of abuse, or complaint

Role Of Staff

All staff working directly with children and young people will:

- be aware of what is meant by safeguarding, protecting and promoting the welfare of children and the different ways in which children and young people can be harmed
- be alert to potential indicators of abuse or neglect
- be alert to the risks which individual abusers, or potential abusers may pose to children
- communicate effectively and develop working relationships with other staff, volunteers, children and parents to safeguard, protect and promote the welfare of children
- be aware of the roles of other practitioners and agencies in supporting and advising families and safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- adhere to the relevant Codes of Conduct appropriate to role

All staff with a strategic role will recognise the indirect effect of their work on children, and as such will:

- be aware of what is meant by safeguarding, protecting and promoting the welfare of children
- be alert to potential indicators of abuse or neglect
- be alert to the risks which individual abusers, or potential abusers may pose to children
- be able to report concerns in line with procedures
- represent the organisation's approach to safeguarding and protecting children

RECOGNITION

Introduction

Even for those experienced in working with child abuse, it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. Sports staff, whether in a paid or voluntary capacity, are not experts at such recognition. However, they do have a responsibility to act if they have any concerns about the behaviour of someone (an adult or another child) towards a young person by reporting their concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

All staff and volunteers have a duty to discuss any concern they may have about the welfare of a child immediately with the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

Abuse & Neglect

All staff should have an understanding of abuse and neglect and know how and when to take action. ESS will put in place training and support programmes to ensure that all personnel are able to effectively deal with any suspicions of poor practice, abuse or neglect.

'Child abuse and neglect' are forms of maltreatment of a child. These terms include serious physical and sexual assaults as well as cases where the standard of care does not adequately support the child's health or development.

Children may be abused or neglected through the infliction of harm, or through the failure to act to prevent harm.

Abuse can occur within the family or in an institution or community setting. Abuse can also take place using electronic communication. Abuse can occur within all social groups regardless of religion, culture, social class or financial position.

Children may be abused by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult/s or other child/ren.

There are four broad categories of abuse:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect

These categories overlap and an abused child frequently suffers more than a single type of abuse.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

It may also be caused when a parent/carer fabricates symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Examples of physical abuse in sport may be when the nature and intensity of training and competition exceeds the capacity of the child's immature and growing body; where drugs are used to enhance performance or delay puberty.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child's emotional development, and may involve:

- conveying to children they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person (verbally or via electronic and written communication)
- imposing developmentally inappropriate expectations e.g. interactions beyond the child's developmental capability, overprotection, limitation of exploration and learning, preventing the child from participation in normal social interaction
- causing children to feel frightened or in danger e.g. witnessing domestic abuse, seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another
- exploitation or corruption of children
- serious bullying

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in most types of ill treatment of children, though emotional abuse may occur alone.

Emotional abuse in sport may occur if children are subjected to constant criticism, name-calling, sarcasm, bullying or unrealistic pressure to consistently perform to high expectations.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

Sexual activities may also include non-contact activities, e.g. involving children in looking at, or in production of abusive images, watching sexual activities or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. This may include use of photographs, pictures, cartoons, literature or sound recordings e.g. the internet, books, magazines, audio cassettes, tapes, CD's.

Children under 16 years of age cannot provide lawful consent to any sexual activity, though in practice many are involved in sexual contact to which, as individuals, they may have agreed.

In sport, coaching techniques which involve physical contact with children could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. The power of the coach over young performers, if misused, may also lead to abusive situations developing.

Neglect

Neglect involves the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health and development.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse.

Once the child is born, neglect may involve failure to:

- provide adequate food, clothing or shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- protect from physical and emotional harm or danger
- meet or respond to a child's basic emotional needs
- ensure adequate supervision including use of adequate care-takers
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- ensure that her/his educational needs are met

Neglect in sport could include a teacher or coach not ensuring children were safe, exposing them to undue cold, heat or to unnecessary risk of injury.

Recognising Abuse & Neglect

Factors described below are frequently found in cases of abuse and/or neglect. Their presence is not proof abuse has occurred, but:

- must be regarded as indicators of possible significant harm
- justify the need for careful assessment and discussion with the Designated Safeguarding Officer
- may require consultation with and/or referral to Local Social Services

Indications that a child may be experiencing abuse include the following:

- the child appears frightened of the parent/s
- the child acts in a way that is inappropriate to her/his age
- 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
- unexplained changes in behaviour
- 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 children
- displays variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite
- loses weight for no apparent reason
- becomes increasingly dirty or unkempt

It is not the responsibility of those working for ESS to decide that child abuse is occurring but it is their responsibility to act on any concerns.

Race & Racism

Children and families from black or ethnic minority groups may have experienced harassment, racial and/or religious discrimination and institutional racism. Racial harassment exists in many forms, from subtle discrimination to violent physical abuse.

Racial harassment of children can have long term damaging effects on all the dimensions of the child's growth and development, and prevent them from achieving their full potential. Families may suffer religious and/or racial harassment sufficient in frequency and seriousness to undermine parenting capacity. In responding to concerns about children, full account needs to be taken of this context and all reasonable efforts made to end the harassment.

ESS promotes equality, diversity and strives to combat unfair treatment in sport

Bullying

It is important to recognise that in some cases of abuse, it may not always be an adult abusing a young person. An abuser may be a young person, for example in the case of bullying.

Bullying is a common form of deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, against which it is difficult for victims to defend themselves.

The damage inflicted by bullying is often underestimated and can cause considerable distress to children to the extent that it affects their health and development. In the extreme it can cause significant harm, including self-harm.

It can take many forms, but can include: physical (e.g. hitting, kicking), theft, verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name calling), and emotional (e.g. isolating an individual from social activities).

The competitive nature of sport makes it an ideal environment for the bully. The bully in sport can be:

- a parent who pushes too hard
- a coach who adopts a win-at-all costs philosophy
- a player who intimidates inappropriately
- an official who places unfair pressure on a person

There are a number of signs that may indicate that a young person is being bullied, such as:

- behavioural changes such as reduced concentration and/or becoming withdrawn, clingy, depressed, tearful, emotionally up and down, reluctance to go to school, training or sports club
- a drop off in performance at school or standard of play
- physical signs such as stomach-aches, headaches, difficulty in sleeping, bed-wetting, scratching and bruising, damaged clothes and bingeing for example on food, cigarettes or alcohol
- a shortage of money or frequent loss of possessions

Disabled Children

Evidence suggests disabled children are at increased risk of abuse and the presence of multiple disabilities increases the risk of both abuse and neglect.

A disabled child may be especially vulnerable because of:

- a need for practical assistance in daily living, including intimate care
- carers/staff lacking ability to communicate adequately with her/him
- a lack of continuity in care leading to an increased risk that behavioural changes go unnoticed
- carers working with the disabled person in isolation
- physical dependency with consequent reduction in ability to be able to resist abuse
- communication or learning difficulties preventing disclosure
- some sex offenders may target disabled children in the belief that they are less likely to be detected

In addition to the universal indicators of abuse/neglect mentioned, the following abusive behaviours must be considered:

- force feeding

- unjustified or excessive physical restraint
- rough handling
- extreme behaviour modification including the deprivation of liquid, medication, food or clothing
- misuse of medication, sedation, heavy tranquillisation
- invasive procedures against the person's will
- deliberate failure to follow medically recommended regimes
- misapplication of programmes or regimes
- ill fitting equipment e.g. callipers which may cause injury or pain, or inappropriate splinting

Safeguards for disabled children are essentially the same as for non disabled children and should include enabling them to:

- make their wishes and feelings known
- receive appropriate personal, social and health (inc. sex) education
- raise concerns
- have a means of communication and a range of adults with whom they can communicate

Abuse of Position of Trust

A position of trust is one in which an adult holds a position of authority or influence over children by virtue of the work or nature of the activity being undertaken.

It is important to understand the need for those working in sport to maintain appropriate boundaries in dealing with young people. Intimate or sexual relationships between staff and young people under 18 years of age, irrespective of sexual orientation, will be regarded as a grave breach of trust, and may be a criminal offence.

RESPONSE

Introduction

It is not the responsibility of ESS staff to take individual responsibility for deciding whether or not child abuse or poor practice is actually taking place.

However it is the responsibility of every member of staff to report concerns in order that appropriate agencies can then make enquiries and take any necessary action to protect the child.

All information received and discussed must be treated in confidence and only shared with those individuals within the organisation who will be able to manage and resolve the situation. On occasion it may be necessary to seek advice, or inform the statutory agencies i.e. Children's Social Services/LADO or the Police.

Reporting

There are a number of ways in which abuse can become apparent. In any of the following circumstances, a report should be immediately referred to the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

- a **disclosure** by a child of poor practice/abuse
- a **suspicion** that poor practice/abuse may have taken place
- an **allegation** of poor practice/abuse

In being vigilant of child protection it is crucial that all staff are aware of the steps used to recognise signs of child abuse.

As soon as possible after the disclosure/allegation/suspicion, an Incident Report Form must be completed accurately, legibly and in as much detail as possible and submitted within 24 hours to the Designated Safeguarding Officer, who will notify Children's Social services/LADO/Police. [Please refer to list of LSCBs and their relevant LADOs \(Local Authority Designated Officers\) on page 18.](#)

If as a result of the report, the young person becomes an identified 'Child in Need', or should the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) need clarification or further information, staff may be asked to take part in discussions – this could be over the telephone or at an initial strategy meeting.

If the situation is one of child abuse, or a child is in imminent danger, the Designated Safeguarding Officer should contact the Duty Manager for Social Services in the area in which the young person lives.

If the Designated Safeguarding Officer or Deputy Safeguarding Officer are not available, the person discovering or being informed of the abuse should immediately contact Children's Social services/LSCB or the police, who will decide how and when parents/carers/guardians will be informed and ultimately become responsible for what steps to take next.

The authority will make a decision within 24 hours if a formal 'referral' (further action) is required. Within 7 working days, an initial assessment will be completed based on the child's development needs, family and environment factors, and parenting capacity.

RESPONSE/Cont.

The following are the Local Safeguarding Children Boards for each borough ESS operate in, together with the contact number for each relevant LADO (Local Authority Designated Office) or MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub):

Barking & Dagenham	020 8227 3811
Barnet	020 8359 4066
Brent	020 8937 4300
Camden	020 7974 3317
Chalfont	01296 382070
Croydon	020 8255 2888
Ealing	020 8825 8930
Enfield	020 8379 2850
Greenwich	020 8921 3930
Hackney	020 8356 4569
Hammersmith & Fulham	020 8753 5125
Haringey	020 8489 4470
Harrow	020 8901 2690
Havering	01708 431653
Hertsmere	0300 123 4043
Hillingdon	01895 556006
Hounslow	020 8583 6600

Islington	020 7527 4234
Kensington & Chelsea	020 7361 3013
Lambeth	020 7926 4679
Lewisham	020 8314 3114
Merton	020 8545 3179
Newham	020 3373 4600
Richmond upon Thames	020 8547 5008
Slough	01753 474053
Southwark	020 7525 0689
St Albans	0300 123 4043
Sutton	020 8770 5000
Three Rivers	0300 123 4043
Watford	0300 123 4043
Waltham Forest	07791 559789
Wandsworth	020 8871 6622
Westminster	07870 481712

Disclosure by a Child

Children who are being abused will only tell people they trust and with whom they feel safe. By listening to and taking seriously what a child is telling you, you will already be helping to protect them.

If a child starts to disclose abuse, use the following guidelines:

- React calmly so as not to frighten or deter the child.
- Reassure the child that s/he is right to tell you and is not to blame.
- Do not make promises of confidentiality; explain that you have to make sure that s/he is safe, and that you may need to ask other adults to help you to do this.
- Take what the child says seriously, recognising the difficulties inherent in interpreting what is said by a child who has a speech disability and/or differences in language.
- Keep questions to the absolute minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said. Questions should only consist of Who...? What...? When...? Where...? Questions should be not be leading.
- Let the child tell you what s/he wants to tell you and no more. S/he may have to disclose to a specialist later, and too much detail now may interfere with later investigations.
- When the child has finished, make sure s/he feels secure. Explain what you are going to do next.
- Make a full written record of what has been said, heard and/or seen, including the date and time, and sign them.
- Record as much as you can remember, using the child's own words.
- Fill in an **Elms Sport in Schools Incident Report Form**
- Ensure the safety of the young person – if they need immediate medical attention, call an ambulance, inform doctors of concerns and ensure that they are aware it is a child protection issue.
- Immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer

Suspected Abuse

Any suspicion that a child has been abused by either a member of staff or a volunteer should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk. i.e. is the situation URGENT or GRAVE? If not complete and submit a written report within 24 hours.

- The Designated Safeguarding Officer will seek advice from Children's Social services/LADO who may involve the police.

- The parents or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social services department.
- If the Designated Safeguarding Officer is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to the Deputy Safeguarding Officer or directly to a member of the Senior Management team who is then responsible for taking the action outlined above.

Sharing Concerns with Parents

ESS is committed to working in partnership with parents where there are concerns about their children. Therefore, in most situations, it would be important to talk to parents to help clarify any initial concerns. For example, if a child seems withdrawn, there may be a reasonable explanation. S/he may have experienced an upset in the family, such as a parental separation, divorce or bereavement. If you are unsure what to do, discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

There are circumstances in which a young person might be placed at even greater risk if concerns are shared (e.g. where a parent or carer may be responsible for the abuse or not able to respond to the situation appropriately). In these situations or where concerns still exist, any suspicion, allegation or incident of abuse must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer in charge as soon as possible and recorded.

Allegations against Staff

Any concerns for the welfare of the child, arising from abuse or poor practice by a member of staff or volunteer, must be dealt with in the same way as allegations against other people and reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

If the allegation is about the Designated Safeguarding Officer, the report should be made to the Deputy Safeguarding Officer or a member of ESS Senior Management Team.

Where there is a complaint of abuse against a member of staff or volunteer, there may be three types of investigation:

- Criminal
- Child protection
- Disciplinary or misconduct

Civil proceedings could also be initiated by the person/family of the person who alleged the abuse.

ESS disciplinary investigations will take into account all relevant information, including the results of any police and social services investigations and those of other partners.

Internal Enquiries and Suspension

ESS will follow strict disciplinary procedures with regards to the suspension of any individual accused of abuse, pending further police and social services inquiries.

All relevant sports personnel will be notified of the suspension and the investigation procedures that the Unit may instigate in the event of an allegation. This will be included as part of their induction training and signing up to the Code of Conduct

Irrespective of the findings of the social services or police inquiries, ESS will assess all individual cases under the appropriate misconduct/disciplinary procedures, to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer should be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled with other staff or volunteers.

This may be a difficult decision, particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, ESS will reach a decision based on the available information that could suggest, on a balance of probability, it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of children will always remain paramount.

Poor Practice

If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice, the Designated Safeguarding Officer for the National Governing Body of Sport will also be informed and their complaints and appeals procedures will be followed.

If the allegation is about poor practice by the Designated Safeguarding Officer, or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be referred to the Senior Management Team, to decide how to deal with the allegation and whether or not disciplinary proceedings should be initiated.

Support for Staff

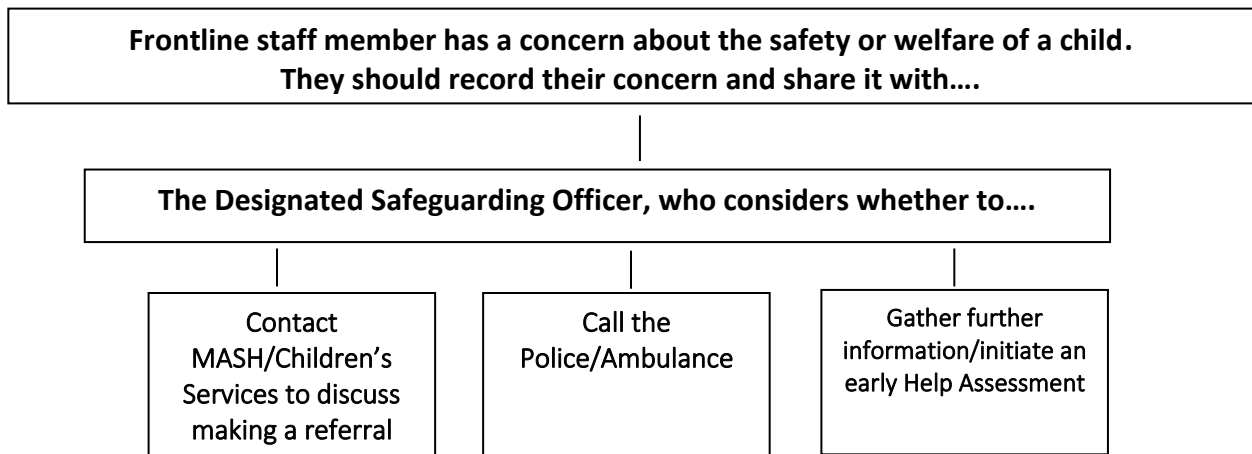
ESS will ensure adequate support is made available, that is appropriate to children, parents and members of staff.

It is acknowledged that feelings generated by the discovery that a member of staff or volunteer is, or may be, abusing a child, will raise concerns among other staff or volunteers. This includes the difficulties inherent in reporting such matters.

ESS assures all staff that they will fully support and protect anyone who, in good faith (without malicious intent), reports his or her concern about a colleague's practice or the possibility that a child may be being abused.

Staff are entitled to free, confidential counselling sessions with an independent, experienced professional counsellor.

Making a Child Protection Decision



Advice for Frontline Staff

DO

- Be accessible and receptive
- Listen carefully
- Take it seriously
- Reassure him/her that he/she was right to tell
- Say what will happen next
- Consult immediately with DSL
- Make a careful record of what was said

DON'T

- React strongly, e.g. "that's terrible!"
- Jump to conclusions, especially about the abuser
- Speculate or accuse anybody
- Tell him/her you will keep their secret
- Ask leading questions
- Make promises you cannot keep
- Stop them from speaking freely
- Tell him/her to stop talking so you can go and fetch the DSL

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 child or by a member of staff who is still currently working with children). Where such an allegation is made, the procedures as detailed above should be used and the matter reported to the police, as other children, either within or outside sport, may be at risk from this person. Anyone who has a previous criminal conviction for offences related to child abuse is automatically excluded from working with children.

Action if Bullying is Suspected

All personnel will be provided with training, support and information as appropriate.

Procedure for dealing with bullying includes:

- Record the incident using an Incident Report Form
- Speak to the bully separately and agree a course of action
- Follow up to ensure the victim is safe
- Aim to integrate the victim into the group
- Praise the bully for any subsequent positive behaviour
- Track any further action, including speaking to other agencies or parents, or undertaking any mediation or other meetings
- Inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer

GOOD PRACTICE

Introduction

All ESS staff will be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to promote the welfare of young people and reduce the likelihood of allegations being made.

Code of Ethics and Conduct

All staff, whether paid or volunteers, must sign up to the Code of Ethics and Conduct.

The Code encourages the development of an open and positive climate so that:

- poor practice is identified and addressed
- investigations are carried out
- disciplinary action is taken if appropriate

Use of Photographic Filming Equipment

There is evidence that some people have used sporting events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young and disabled sportspeople in vulnerable positions.

Where photography or filming equipment has been organised for publicity purposes, consent should be sought from parents or carers.

DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service)

ESS require an 'enhanced' criminal record check as part of our rigorous recruitment process. These checks are processed by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

This check will also include information held on the DBS children's and adults' barred lists, alongside any information held by local police forces that is considered to be relevant to the applied-for post.

If a DBS check reveals a minor offence, which will **NOT** affect the applicant's coaching role, a risk assessment will be carried out to confirm all is safe for the coach to work within a school environment.

Staff are encouraged to sign up to the DBS Update Service to ensure their record is regularly checked. Failing this, safe practice will come into effect and ALL staff will undertake an enhanced DBS check.

It is also compulsory for all Elms coaches to complete a 'Disqualification by Association Declaration'

Staffing & Supervision Ratios

It is important to ensure that, in planning and running sports activities for children and young people, consideration is given to providing an appropriate staffing/supervision ratio of adults to participants. This will minimise any risks to participants, enhance the benefits they draw from the activity, reassure carers, and provide some protection for those responsible for providing the activity in the event of concerns or incidents arising.

Use of Electronic Communication

There is growing concern being expressed about what is and what is not permissible in the area of communication between adults and children and young people in sport.

Understandably, with the rapid development of mobile phones, text messaging, email and other forms of electronic communication, these methods of communicating have become a feature of the sporting landscape.

There is evidence of the use of mobile phones and other electronic communication for grooming or other purposes by coaches and others in positions of trust in relation to children throughout sport. There have also been incidents of young athletes becoming very distressed as a result of bullying by coaches or others who have contacted them without parental knowledge on their mobiles.

It is important to acknowledge the potential risks and additional vulnerability of children and young people, and adopt good practice for the use of mobile phones and other forms of electronic communication.

Duty of Care

It is widely accepted that in relation to children and young people, sports organisations have a duty of care.

In essence, duty of care means that a sports body needs to take such measures as are reasonable in the circumstances to ensure that individuals will be safe to participate in an activity to which they are invited to or which is permitted.

A duty of care may be imposed by common law or statute, by contract, or by acceptance by an individual. In some cases the law imposes a duty of care, for example, the duty of care the police have when they arrest someone.

There is no general duty of care upon members of the public towards the public at large. If there is a formal relationship, however, for example between a club and a club member, or a coach and an athlete, there is a duty of care.

When children and young people are involved in organised sports activities and are to any extent under the care and/or control of one or more adults, the adult(s) have a duty to take reasonable care to ensure their safety and welfare.

It is important to clarify what that duty entails and to provide some guidance as to what steps can be taken in order to demonstrate that this duty is being met.

Managing Challenging Behaviour

Staff delivering sports activities to children may, on occasions, be required to deal with a child's challenging behaviour.

In responding to challenging behaviour, the response should always be proportionate to the actions, be imposed as soon as is practicable and be fully explained to the child and their parents/carers.

Staff, children, young people and parents/carers should be involved in developing an agreed statement of what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour (code of conduct) and the range of sanctions which may be applied in response to unacceptable behaviour.

When registering for extra curricular activities or holiday camps, ESS provide a Code of Ethics and Conduct for;

- Coaches
- Spectators
- Parents & Carers
- Children & Young People

ESS coaches will follow a Schools Behaviour Policy when delivery physical education during term time.

CODES OF ETHICS AND CONDUCT

Introduction

Sport not only provides opportunities for enjoyment and achievement, it can also develop valuable qualities such as self-esteem, leadership and teamwork. These positive effects for young people and vulnerable adults can only take place if sport is in the right hands - in the hands of those who place the welfare of all young people and vulnerable adults first and adopt practices that support, protect and empower them.

The reality is that abuse does take place in sport and in some cases coaches and other trusted adults in sport have been convicted. Every adult has a legal and moral responsibility to protect children, young people and disabled people in sport from abuse.

Adopting best practice will help safeguard children, young people and disabled people from potential abuse as well as reducing the likelihood of allegations being made against coaches and other adults in positions of responsibility.

We all have a duty of care towards young and vulnerable performers and can help to protect them from abuse. All staff acting on behalf of ESS are a vital part of the development of individuals through improving their enjoyment and performance in sport.

This is achieved by:

- identifying and meeting the needs of individuals;
- improving performance through a progressive programme of safe, guided practice, measured performance and/or competition;
- creating an environment in which individuals are motivated to maintain participation and improve performance

The following Codes of Conduct should be used for all ESS activities

Where an event is co-ordinated in partnership with (an)other organisation(s), agreement should be reached as to which organisation will be responsible for implementing its Codes of Conduct and associated disciplinary action.

ESS staff will be provided with copies of our Safeguarding Children Policy upon which this Code of Ethics and Conduct is based. ESS also supports and embraces National Governing Bodies of Sport Codes of Conduct.

Code of Ethics and Conduct – Coaches

We all have a duty of care towards children and can help to protect them from abuse. As a coach, you will play a vital part in the development of individuals through enhancing their enjoyment and performance in sport.

This is achieved by:

- identifying and meeting the needs of individuals;
- improving performance through a progressive programme of safe, guided practice, measured performance and/or competition;
- creating an environment in which individuals are motivated to maintain participation and improve performance

You should therefore comply with the principles of good ethical practice listed below:

- 1 You must respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person and treat everyone equally, fairly and sensitively within the context of their sport.
- 2 You must place the well-being and safety of children and young people above the development of their performance. You must follow all guidelines laid down by the sport's governing body and must hold appropriate qualifications and insurance cover.
- 3 You must develop an appropriate working relationship with participants, based on mutual trust and respect. You must avoid any behaviour which might allow an inappropriate relationship to develop with a child or young person, who holds you in a position of trust.
- 4 You must not exert undue influence on a child or young person to obtain personal benefit or reward.
- 5 You must encourage and guide children and young people to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and performance.
- 6 You must ensure the activities you direct or advocate are appropriate for the age, maturity, experience and ability of the participants.
- 7 You should, at the outset, clarify with participants (and where appropriate with their parents) exactly what is expected of them and what participants are entitled to expect from their coach.
- 8 You should cooperate fully with other specialists (e.g. other coaches, officials, sports scientists, doctors, physiotherapists) in the best interests of the participants.
- 9 You should always promote the positive aspects of sport (e.g. fair play) and never condone rule violations or the use of prohibited substances.
- 10 Personal hygiene is of the utmost importance and it is imperative that you are presented in a clean and tidy fashion every day – body odour or unwashed clothes are absolutely unacceptable and may result in your being sent home.

Code of Ethics and Conduct – Coaches /Cont.

- 11 You must be on your best behaviour at all times when representing ESS.
- 12 No smoking or foul language
- 13 Your mobile phone **MUST** be switched off during working hours. You can only use your mobile if completing ESS registers in Extra-Curricular clubs.
- 14 Ensure that any accident or incident is passed on verbally to parents, carers or teachers

It is important to SAFEGUARD yourself from situations which could leave you open to the possibility of accusation. The following points are to be strictly adhered to:

Do:

- Avoid situations where you could be alone with one child
- Keep doors open if working in an enclosed environment
- Exercise extreme caution where physical contact with a child is required
- Give appropriate and professional feedback to parents if and when requested

Don't:

- Personally take part in rough or physical games with children
- Take ANY photographs of children without their parent's or school's written consent
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of a child
- Allow children to use inappropriate language
- Be left alone with a child without another adult knowing why
- Do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves
- Let allegations made by a child go unchallenged or unrecorded

Code of Ethics and Conduct – Parents & Carers

We all have a duty of care towards young and vulnerable performers and can help to protect them from abuse. As a parent or carer, you will play a vital part in the development of your child through enhancing their enjoyment and performance in sport.

This can be achieved by:

- identifying and meeting the needs of young people;
- improving their performance through a progressive programme of safe, guided practice, measured performance and/or competition;
- creating an environment in which young people are motivated to maintain participation and improve performance

We therefore expect parents and carers to demonstrate the principles of good ethical practice listed below:

- 1 You must ensure your child has the appropriate equipment, clothing and refreshments.
- 2 You must inform the coach, activity leader or team manager of any special requirements your child has, or any illness, injury, or medical condition, and ensure your child has access to any required medication.
- 3 You must provide the club/organisation with emergency contact details, and inform them immediately should these change.
- 4 You should be punctual when dropping off and collecting your child.
- 5 You should always be encouraging and respectful to participants, coaches, officials, volunteers and spectators. You should set a good example by recognising fair play and applauding the good performances of all.
- 6 You should encourage your child to learn the rules and play within them.
- 7 You should discourage unfair play and disagreeing with officials, and publicly accept officials' judgements.
- 8 You must help your child to recognise good performance, not just results.
- 9 You must never force your child to take part in sport.
- 10 You must never punish or belittle a child for losing or making mistakes.
- 11 You should take an active interest in your child's participation and progress, and help them to enjoy their sport.
- 12 You must use correct and proper language at all times.
- 13 There are **ALWAYS** two sides to a story and it is always fair to raise concerns for investigation before accusing and coming to conclusions.

Code of Ethics and Conduct – Spectators

We all have a duty of care towards young and vulnerable performers and can help to protect them from abuse. As a spectator, you will play a vital part in the development of young people through enhancing their enjoyment and performance in sport.

This can be achieved by:

- identifying and meeting the needs of young people;
- improving their performance through a progressive programme of safe, guided practice, measured performance and/or competition;
- creating an environment in which young people are motivated to maintain participation and improve performance

We therefore expect spectators to demonstrate the principles of good ethical practice listed below:

- 1 You must remember that children and young people play sport for their own enjoyment, not for entertainment.
- 2 You must not use foul or abusive language, or harass (physically or verbally) any players, managers, coaches or officials.
- 3 You should recognise good play and applaud the good performances of all.
- 4 You should show respect for opponents – without them, there would be no competition.
- 5 You must never scold or ridicule a child for making a mistake during the performance.
- 6 You must respect the decisions of officials without disagreement.
- 7 You should encourage players always to compete within the rules of the sport.
- 8 You should be familiar with the rules of the competition to better understand what you are watching and commenting upon.

Principles of Participation and Code of Conduct – Children & Young People

SPORT is for everyone and is a great way to make new friends, stay fit and healthy, learn new skills and to have FUN! Sport can be exciting, rewarding, challenging and competitive, and gives you a great sense of achievement when you take part. But remember sport should be fun and you should always feel SAFE!

It is the responsibility of everyone – coaches, officials, parents and spectators – to make sure you can stay safe and have fun in sport. But you can also help to make sure sport is an enjoyable experience for all players, by following these principles of participation.

Principles of Participation

Fair Play

Code of Conduct For Participants

Treat others with the same respect and fairness that you would like them to show you.

Demonstrate 'Fair Play' on and off the field.

Win with dignity (do not boast) Lose with grace (recognise you can't always win and to not be upset)

Equality

Respect differences in gender, disability, culture, race, ethnicity, and religious belief systems between yourself and others.

Inclusiveness and tolerance

Appreciate that all participants bring something valuable and different to sport.

Value and learn from the diversity of people you meet and show patience with others and act with dignity at all times.

Always use polite language, and never engage in bullying behaviour.

Responsibility

Look out for yourself and the welfare of others. Do not engage in any irresponsible or illegal behaviour.

Be organised and on time, and prepared for competitions, events and coaching sessions.

Make sure you know what you can do if you are concerned about someone's behaviour towards you or another player.

If an adult or coach hasn't seen what has happened or noticed how you feel, talk to them, they won't always be able to notice.

Friendship

Take time to thank those who help you take part – whether family, organisation or team mates.

Respect

Play to your best ability at all times. Do what your coach asks you to do, as long as you are comfortable to do so, and it is within the rules of the game.

Show respect to referees and officials, and accept all decisions without disagreement.

Always be respectful to other participants, coaches, volunteers and spectators.

Above all have fun!

Coaching Procedures – School Holiday Camps

These procedures apply to our school holiday sports camps. It is essential that every coach follows these procedures. Every point is valid and gained through experience. Please remember you have children in your care and nothing is more important than their safety and wellbeing.

Before Camp

- Coaches to arrive half an hour before Camp
- All staff must wear FULL Elms attire at all times
- Read through Risk Assessment and take any measures necessary
- Familiarise yourself with the surroundings i.e. toilets, cold water etc.
- Set up equipment/courts – **SCHOOL EQUIPMENT MUST NEVER BE USED**
- Coaches to empty litter bins (morning/noon and after camp)
- Coach to be waiting at child drop off area. Show children where to leave their coats/bags/packed lunch etc.

During Camp

- **NO COACH TO LEAVE SITE DURING CAMP** (we suggest you bring a packed lunch and drink with you)
- Head Coach to take the register once all children have arrived, before starting any activities.
- **DO NOT ACCEPT ANY NEW CHILDREN WITHOUT PAYMENT**
- Ensure parents of ALL new children complete a Contact Form (including name, address, tel no etc)
- Call Head Office to advise of any new children and any payments taken
- Do a head count and make sure it tallies with the register
- Familiarise ALL children with the surroundings i.e. toilets, cold water etc.
- Please try to make sure ALL children go to the toilet when the Camp starts and schedule further designated toilet breaks throughout the day – thus eliminating the need for children to go off on their own
- **ALL CHILDREN MUST BE ACCOMPANIED TO THE TOILET BY AN OLDER CHILD**
- At lunch time, a coach must sign out children that leave and sign in any new children arriving
- Coaches to retake register after lunch break
- Recount heads
- At the end of the day hand out certificates
- Sign children out when their parents/guardians arrive
- **PLEASE CHECK THERE ARE NO STRANGERS AROUND, ABOUT WHOM YOU HAVE NOT BEEN INFORMED (BUILDERS/MAINTENANCE WORKERS ETC).**

After Camp

- Coaches put all equipment away
- Clean up all areas used, including hall & classrooms
- Make sure all areas used are securely locked and **LEFT CLEAN AND TIDY**
- **UPDATE THE REGISTER EACH DAY AFTER CAMP** - ready for the next day (making note of any extra/new children with contact details, any booking forms & payments you are holding).
- It is essential that you telephone Head Office every afternoon, without fail, to report Camp numbers and details of any problems/accidents. We cannot chase you every day.

Coaching Procedures – School Holiday Camps /Cont.

Staff Mobiles

All staff must have their mobile on and stay in touch with Head Office when necessary. Please ensure you inform The Elms of any change of number immediately.

Registers are to be completed online and this may be via a tablet or phone. Please refer to our **Mobile Phone Policy**.

Accident Procedure

ESS follows a stringent set of rules when dealing with accidents/incidents.

For more information, please refer to our **Accident and Incident Policy**.

Coaching Procedures – After School Clubs

These procedures will apply to ALL the After School Clubs we run.

It is essential you follow these procedures. Every point is valid and gained through experience.

Please remember you have children in your care and nothing is more important than their safety and wellbeing.

Before After School Club

- Read through School Questionnaire
- Coaches to arrive 15 minutes before their club starts
- All staff must have photo ID on them at all times – Elms ID badge
- Familiarise yourself with the surroundings i.e. toilets, cold water etc.
- Set up equipment/play area
- Coach to be waiting for children at designated meeting point
- **PLEASE CHECK THERE ARE NO STRANGERS AROUND, ABOUT WHOM YOU HAVE NOT BEEN INFORMED (BUILDERS/MAINTENANCE WORKERS ETC).**

During After School Club

- Head Coach to take the register once all children have arrived, before starting any activities.
- **DO NOT ACCEPT ANY NEW CHILDREN WITHOUT PAYMENT**
- Ensure parents of ALL new children complete a Contact Form (including name, address, tel no etc)
- Do a head count and make sure it tallies with the register
- Familiarise ALL children with the surroundings i.e. toilets, cold water etc.
- Please try to make sure children go to the toilet prior to activity commencing. Ideally children should not be wandering around the School premises during After School club on their own
- **ALL CHILDREN MUST BE ACCOMPANIED TO THE TOILET BY AN OLDER CHILD**
- At the end of the day hand out certificates
- Ensure all children are collected and they have pointed out parents/carers

End of After School Club

- Coaches put all equipment away
- Clean up all areas used, including hall & classrooms
- Make sure all areas used are securely locked and **LEFT CLEAN AND TIDY**
- Call office to advise of any new children and any payments taken
- **UPDATE THE REGISTER WITHIN 24 HOURS** (making a note of any extra/new children - with contact details & any payments you are holding).
- **Coach must not leave the premises until ALL children have been collected – whatever the time.**

Coaching Procedures – After School Clubs /Cont.

Staff Mobiles

All staff must have their mobile on and stay in touch with Head Office when necessary. Your mobile should not be used for any reason other than emergencies and must not be brought out during the session. It is not a stopwatch!

Accident Procedure

ESS follows a stringent set of rules when dealing with accidents/incidents.

For more information, please refer to our **Accident and Incident Policy**.

Accident and Incident Report Forms MUST be filled in and for minor cases a note left on SIS admin. For serious cases Head Office must be notified immediately

SAFEGUARDING – NEED TO KNOW

What do I do if I am worried about a child's behaviour but haven't disclosed any abuse?

Share your thoughts with the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) at the school or at The Elms.

How do I record my concerns?

Using the schools' documents or an Elms A&I form.

Where are records of allegations and concerns kept and how long are they left on file?

At The Elms, all allegations and concerns are documented and saved safely in a secure file. They are held on record for a period of up to 5 years.

Who is the contact at LADO?

Every borough will have a 'Local Authority Designated Officer'.

How do I respond to a child making a disclosure?

Refer to page 16 of the employers 'Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport' Policy.

How often are the procedures reviewed and by whom?

Every 12 months by senior management

Can children be abused by other young people?

It is important to understand that abuse can be suffered in many forms. This may be from children of a similar age.

Who is my DSO and how can I contact them?

At The Elms – Jason O'Connor. To raise a concern please call Head Office to discuss before next steps are set out.

What if I have a concern about the DSO?

Deputy Safeguarding Officer – Marc Weatherstone

How do I recognise possible signs or indicators of abuse?

Refer to page 12 of the employers 'Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport' Policy.

Where can I find guidance on confidentiality and information sharing?

Refer to page 16 of the employers 'Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport' Policy.

Details of Children Social Care and the NSPCC Helpline

For LADO please refer to page 18 of the employers 'Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport' Policy. Each borough/district or county will have Children's Social Care and this information can be found on the council website.

NSPCC Helpline (free advice) 0808 800 5000

What do I do if there is a clear and immediate threat to a child?

If you feel there is an immediate threat to a child's safety and wellbeing you must contact Children's social care immediately. Failing this, the last resort is to call 999.

Where can I find the Employee Code of Ethics and Conduct?

- a) Affirmation page online
- b) Refer to page 27 of the employers 'Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport' Policy.
- c) <https://www.theelms.co.uk/policies-and-risk-assessments>