



Sports Elite Limited Safeguarding Policy

Introduction

Sports should be enjoyable and everyone should feel safe when taking part. Sports Elite Limited is fully committed to ensuring that all participants have a safe and enjoyable experience during their time at the Academy. This Safeguarding Policy Statement outlines our commitment to safeguarding children and young people involved in our activities.

Scope

This Safeguarding Policy Statement applies to all employees, volunteers, and participants involved in any activity organised or endorsed by Sports Elite Limited. It also applies to all visitors to our premises and any other settings where children and young people are present. All Sports Elite Limited employees and volunteers must comply with and implement the Sports Elite Limited Safeguarding Policy and Procedure as an obligatory condition of their employment or engagement.

Definition of a Child or Young Person

For the purpose of this Safeguarding Policy Statement, a child or 'young person' is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.

Safeguarding Principles

Sports Elite Limited is committed to the following safeguarding principles:

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- All children and young people have the right to be protected from abuse and neglect.
- All children and young people should be able to participate in sports in a safe and enjoyable environment.
- All adults involved in sports have a responsibility to safeguard children and young people.

Our Commitment to Safeguarding

Sports Elite Limited is committed to providing a safe and enjoyable environment for all children and young people. We have a number of procedures in place to safeguard children and young people, including:

- A Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who is responsible for overseeing safeguarding

within the organisation .

- A Safeguarding Officer (SO) who is responsible for supporting the DSL and providing advice and guidance on safeguarding matters.
- A Safeguarding Policy and Procedures document that outlines our commitment to safeguarding and the procedures we have in place to protect children and young people.
- A Safeguarding Training Programme that all employees and volunteers must complete.
- A Reporting Procedure that allows children, young people, parents, and carers to report any concerns about safeguarding.

Everyone's Responsibility

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All adults involved in sports have a role to play in protecting children and young people. We encourage all our employees, volunteers, and participants to be aware of the signs of abuse and neglect, and to report any concerns they may have.

Safeguarding Lead Officer

Sports Elite Limited has appointed a trained Safeguarding Lead Officer whose role is to act as a point of safeguarding information and advice.

The Safeguarding Lead Officer at Sports Elite Limited should be informed if any concerns arise in any activity or coaching session involving a young person or an adult.

You can contact the Sports Elite Limited Safeguarding Lead Officer by emailing Safeguarding@sportseliteltd.co.uk or calling +44 7710 570547.

Safeguarding: Protecting Children and Adults in Sports

Safeguarding encompasses the actions and procedures taken to ensure the safety and well-being of children and adults involved in sporting activities. It aims to prevent harm, promote positive experiences, and create an environment where everyone feels respected and valued.

Distinguishing Poor Practice from Abuse

While defining poor practice can be challenging, Sports Elite Limited recognises it as any behaviour that contradicts its Safeguarding Policy and Procedures. The organisation upholds the expectation that all staff and volunteers consistently adhere to best safeguarding practices.

Key Elements of Best Safeguarding Practice

1. Foster a Fun and Enjoyable Environment: Encourage participation, fairness, and adherence to the rules of the sport.
2. Promote a Positive and Inclusive Atmosphere: Create opportunities for all participants to thrive and feel valued.
3. Effectively Address Issues: Promptly and appropriately confront and resolve any concerns, including bullying.
4. Prioritise Youth Development: Respect the developmental stage of each participant and place their well-being above competitive goals.
5. Maintain Open and Observable Coaching: Conduct activities and sessions in open spaces,

avoiding one-on-one coaching in secluded areas.

6. **Build Trustful Relationships:** Encourage open communication and mutual respect, empowering young people to take ownership of their development.
7. **Be Aware of Medical Conditions:** Stay informed about participants' medical conditions, allergies, existing injuries, and prescribed medications.
8. **Document Injuries and Accidents:** Maintain detailed records of any injuries or accidents, including the treatment provided.
9. **Maintain Professional Coach-Participant Boundaries:** Foster a safe and appropriate relationship, setting clear boundaries and avoiding personal interactions.
10. **Serve as a Positive Role Model:** Uphold high ethical standards and advocate for the sport or activity.
11. **Handle Allegations Promptly:** Treat all reports of poor practice or abuse with respect and immediately inform the Lead Safeguarding Officer.

Sports Elite Limited is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for all participants, ensuring their well-being and enjoyment of the sports they pursue.

Child abuse

Child abuse is the mistreatment of a child. It can take various forms, such as intentionally inflicting harm or failing to take action to prevent harm. This abuse often comes from someone the child knows and trusts.

Sports Elite Limited recognises that child abuse can occur both inside and outside the family home. It is not easy to determine whether abuse has taken place. However, it is the responsibility of professional agencies, such as Children's Social Care and the Police, to make such decisions.

Sports Elite Limited staff have a duty to be vigilant and respond to any disclosures of abuse. The following are the categories of child abuse: neglect, physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and child sexual exploitation (CSE). While bullying is not technically considered a form of child abuse, it is recognised as a harmful act that can cause significant distress to a child.

General signs of neglect:

- Persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs.
- This is likely to result in severe impairment of the child's health or development.

Possible physical signs to watch out for:

- Constantly hungry and sometimes stealing food from others.
- Being in an unkempt state, frequently dirty or smelly.
- Unexplained weight loss or persistent underweight.
- Being dressed inappropriately for the prevailing weather conditions.
- Untreated medical conditions, including failure to seek medical attention for illnesses or injuries.

Physical Abuse

A form of mistreatment encompassing actions such as hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, scalding, drowning, suffocating, or any behaviour causing physical harm to a child.

Potential indicators to observe:

- Injuries that the child struggles to explain or provides unconvincing explanations for.
- Untreated or inadequately treated injuries.
- Injuries located on parts of the body where accidental harm is improbable, such as the cheeks, chest, or thighs.
- Bruising indicative of hand or finger marks.
- Cigarette burns and human bite marks.
- Fractured bones.
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Emotional Abuse

The continual emotional harm inflicted upon a child, leading to severe and lasting adverse effects on their emotional development.

Potential physical signs to be vigilant about:

- Failure to grow or thrive.
- Delayed development, whether physical or emotional.

Possible behavioural cues to be aware of:

- Unwillingness or inability to engage in play.
- Excessive fear of making mistakes.
- Self-harm tendencies.
- Reluctance to allow contact with parents.
- Overly defensive behaviour, especially towards adults.
- Excessive need for approval, attention, or affection.
- Inability to handle praise.

Sexual Abuse

Involves compelling or enticing a child or young person to participate in sexual activities.

Potential behavioural signs to watch for:

- Sudden or unexplained shifts in behaviour.
- Apparent fear of a specific individual.
- Self-harm, self-mutilation, or suicide attempts.
- Substance abuse.
- Eating disorders.
- Sexualised behaviour or knowledge in young children.

Child Sexual Exploitation

Child Sexual Exploitation is a distressing form of sexual abuse that ensnares young individuals, compelling them to participate in sexual activities through manipulation or coercion. This insidious phenomenon manifests in various ways, ranging from ostensibly consensual relationships where sex is traded for attention, affection, money, drugs, alcohol, or basic necessities like food and shelter, to more sinister instances orchestrated by organised crime entities such as gangs.

The defining characteristic of exploitation lies in the inherent power imbalance within the relationship. Perpetrators wield some form of power over their victims, a dominance that

intensifies as the exploitative dynamic evolves. The use of technology, particularly social media networks, is prevalent among perpetrators who employ it as a tool for grooming victims. The clandestine nature of this abuse is exacerbated by the victim's trust in the abuser, leading to a lack of comprehension regarding the reasons for their victimisation. Child and young victims often endure violent, humiliating, and degrading sexual acts in silence.

Detecting signs of CSE requires vigilance for potential behavioural indicators, including but not limited to:

- Regularly going missing for extended periods, potentially resulting in frequent school absences.
- Acquiring unexplained gifts or possessions.
- Associating with peers involved in exploitation.
- Entering into relationships with significantly older individuals.
- Engaging in substance abuse, such as drug and alcohol misuse.
- Displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour.

Addressing CSE necessitates not only an understanding of its multifaceted nature but also a commitment to recognising and responding to the subtle signs that victims may exhibit.

Bullying

While bullying is not considered a form of child abuse in its own right, it encompasses several common areas, including emotional, physical, racist, sexual, homophobic, verbal, and cyber bullying.

The potential physical signs may coincide with those identified in the examples above. It is essential to emphasise that it is NOT your responsibility to determine whether a child is being abused, bullied, or if the situation involves poor practice. Your responsibility is to share your concerns about a situation with the Sports Elite Limited Lead Safeguarding Officer.

Sports Elite Limited recognises the consequences for children when they experience abuse or neglect:

- Child protection issues can arise in any location.
- The importance of early intervention.
- The necessity for an appropriate response.

Extremism and Radicalisation

Unraveling the Process

The intricate journey through which an individual aligns themselves with terrorism and various forms of extremism unfolds with discernible patterns.

Potential behavioural indicators include:

- The young person distancing themselves from their cultural or religious heritage.
- Feelings of discomfort regarding their societal placement.
- Personal crises, often exacerbated by family tensions.
- A prevailing sense of isolation.
- Low self-esteem coupled with a pervasive feeling of failure.
- Disassociation from existing friends and a sudden immersion into a new group of 'friends.'
- An earnest quest for answers to questions surrounding identity, faith, and a sense of belonging.

Just as in handling other safeguarding risks, it is imperative for staff to remain vigilant to shifts in children's behaviours. These changes may serve as crucial signals that a child might be in need of assistance or protection.

Incident Referral Process

In the unfortunate event that a child discloses information indicative of abuse or poor practice, it is crucial to emphasise that the recipient is not tasked with passing judgment on the credibility of the disclosure. Equally important is the recognition that an investigation to ascertain the veracity of the claims is not within the remit of the recipient. Instead, immediate and decisive action must be taken in accordance with the following comprehensive procedures:

- **Maintaining Composure and Documentation:**

Retain composure and engage in active, empathetic listening without resorting to voice or video recording, opting instead for meticulous written notes.

- **Communication and Confidentiality:**

Articulate clearly that the disclosed information may necessitate sharing with relevant parties, refraining from making assurances of absolute confidentiality.

- **Respectful Engagement:**

Allow the child to articulate their experiences at their own pace, refraining from interruptions during the free recall phase.

- **Clarification Through Open Questions:**

Pose 'open' questions for the sole purpose of seeking clarification, avoiding leading or suggestive inquiries.

- **Reassurance and Explanation:**

Offer reassurance to the child, affirming their decision to disclose. Clearly explain the subsequent steps and articulate with whom the information will be shared.

- **Safety Assessment:**

Evaluate the safety of the child post-disclosure, considering potential delays, especially if the allegation involves a parent. Seek professional advice from the police or children's services.

- **Prompt Contact with Safeguarding Officer:**

Immediately initiate contact with the Safeguarding Officer at Sports Elite Limited, providing a detailed account of the disclosed information.

- **Contact Information for Achieving for Children:**

Reference the contact numbers for Achieving for Children in Richmond and Kingston, available on the Governance page of Sports Elite Limited's website.

- **Comprehensive Documentation:**

Methodically record the disclosure, encompassing the child's verbatim statements, date, time, names mentioned, the recipient of the information, and affix a signature along with the date. Consider utilising the Concern Reporting Form available on the Sports Elite Limited website for assistance.

If Witnessing or Receiving a Report Regarding a Coach/Staff Member:

- **Immediate Notification and Consultation:**

The staff member in receipt of the allegation should promptly inform the Sports Elite Limited Safeguarding Officer. In cases of uncertainty, seek guidance from the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

- **Local Authority Involvement:**

The Safeguarding Officer will promptly inform the local authority to discuss the nature of the allegation and determine the most appropriate investigative strategy.

- **Suspension and Disciplinary Measures:**

The staff member implicated in the allegation will be suspended from working with children pending the investigation, adhering to Sports Elite Limited disciplinary procedures.

- **Communication with Sport Governing Body:**

The sport governing body will be informed if the staff member is found guilty of an offence that may have harmed a child, committed a criminal offence against a child, or exhibited behaviour indicating a potential risk or harm to children.

Acknowledging the inherent challenges associated with reporting concerns of abuse, anyone stepping forward to report concerns regarding a child's safety or a colleague's potential risk to a child will be met with comprehensive support and assistance.

Communication between Employees, Volunteers, and Children

This comprehensive guidance aims to provide practical advice to all staff members, ensuring that their conduct and relationships are not only entirely proper but are also perceived as such by all stakeholders. To this end, adhere scrupulously to the following detailed guidelines:

- **Protection of Personal Information:**

Refrain from disseminating personal phone numbers or addresses to individuals under the age of 18.

- **Social Media Etiquette:**

Abstain from extending invitations to children or parents to connect on social networking sites, meticulously safeguarding social media profiles.

- **Image Appropriateness and Consent:**

Exercise prudence in photography, ensuring that all images are appropriate and contribute to the positive portrayal of the sport and coaching sessions. Obtain explicit consent from Sports Elite Limited Management and parents/guardians before uploading any photographs or videos to social media, advertising campaigns, or the website.

- **Transportation Protocols:**

Do not transport children by car without obtaining explicit authorisation from Sports Elite Limited Management and the parent/guardian. Children under the age of 11 should not travel in the front seat, and no child should be left unattended in a vehicle with a driver.

- **Insurance Verification:**

Prior to arranging or agreeing to any transportation, verify car insurance coverage with your insurance company.

- **Changing Room Protocol:**

Adhere strictly to the RFU Policy regarding changing rooms, entering only when absolutely

necessary due to poor behaviour, injury, or illness.

- **Confidentiality Rules:**

Respect and uphold the rules of confidentiality, ensuring that any child-related issues are managed in accordance with the prescribed safeguarding procedures outlined by Sports Elite Limited.

- **Gifts and Favors:**

Decline the acceptance of gifts or favours from children or their parents on a regular basis. Similarly, refrain from providing gifts to children, except in cases of competitions or special recognition at Camps as sanctioned by Sports Elite Limited Management.

- **Maintaining Professional Boundaries:**

Refrain from engaging in a sexual relationship with any person under the age of 18. While not necessarily a criminal offence once the child is over 16, such behaviour will be treated with utmost seriousness.

In instances of uncertainty, individuals are strongly encouraged to seek guidance from the Sports Elite Limited Lead Safeguarding Officer.

I confirm I have read and will abide by Sports Elite Limited's Safeguarding Policy & Procedures.

Signature of employee:

Print name of employee:

Date: 01/10/2024

Next Review: 01/10/2025