

SPORT



SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

THE GUERNSEY SPORTS COMMISSION BELIEVES IN SAFEGUARDING AND PROVIDING FOR THE INTERESTS AND WELLBEING OF CHILDREN BY TAKING ALL REASONABLE STEPS TO PROTECT THEM FROM HARM, DISCRIMINATION OR DEGRADING TREATMENT WHILST RESPECTING THEIR RIGHTS, WISHES AND FEELINGS.

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Policy statement

The Guernsey Sports Commission acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, States of Guernsey guidance and complies with best practice requirements.

The policy recognises that the welfare and interests of children are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that regardless of age, ability or disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, socio-economic background, all children:

- have a positive and enjoyable experience of sport at the Guernsey Sports Commission in a safe and child centred environment.
- are protected from abuse whilst participating in Guernsey Sports Commission activities.

[Insert name of organisation] acknowledges that some children, including disabled children and young people or those from ethnic minority communities, can be particularly vulnerable to abuse and we accept the responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare.

As part of our safeguarding policy The Guernsey Sports Commission will

- promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and young people
- ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and is provided with appropriate learning opportunities to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and young people
- ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents/concerns of abuse and support provided to the individual/s who raise or disclose the concern
- ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored
- prevent the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals
- ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation.

The policy and procedures will be widely promoted and are mandatory for everyone involved in the Guernsey Sports Commission. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.

Monitoring

The policy will be reviewed a year after development and then every three years, or in the following circumstances:

- changes in legislation and/or government guidance.
- as required by the Local Safeguarding Children Board or UK Sport.
- as a result of any other significant change or event.

A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (Except for Part V of the criminal law, dealing with remand, where the age is under 17) (The Children (Guernsey and Alderney) Law 2008).

Promoting good practice

Child abuse, particularly sexual abuse, can arouse strong emotions in those facing such a situation. It is important to understand these feelings and not allow them to interfere with your judgement about the appropriate action to take.

Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school and the sporting environment. Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with young people in order to harm them. A coach, instructor, teacher, official or volunteer will have regular contact with young people and will be an important link in identifying cases where they need protection. All suspicious cases of poor practice should be reported following the guidelines in this document.

Sport and physical activity are great fun and help children in many parts of their development. Sport attracts people from all parts of Guernsey's community and helps bring people together. The Guernsey Sports Commission must work to ensure the child receives the most appropriate support to come and enjoy participating in sport/physical activity.

Good practice guidelines

All personnel should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from false allegations. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

Good practice means:

- Always work in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets).
- Treat all children & young people with respect and dignity.
- Always put the welfare of each young person first, before achieving goals or winning.
- Maintain a safe and appropriate distance (e.g. it is not appropriate for staff or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child or to share a room with them).
- Build relationships based on mutual trust, which empowers children to share in the decision-making process.
- Make activities fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play, without prejudice.
- Ensure that if any form of manual/physical support is required, it should be provided openly and appropriately. Care is needed, as it is difficult to position hands appropriately in certain circumstances. Children & Young people should be consulted and their agreement gained. Some parents are becoming increasingly sensitive about manual support and their views should always be carefully considered.
- Involving parents/carers whenever appropriate. For example, engaging them to take responsibility for their children in the changing rooms. If groups have to be supervised in the changing rooms, try to ensure that parents, instructors or volunteers work in pairs.

- Ensure that where possible, a male and female member of staff should always accompany mixed groups. However, remember that same-gender abuse can also occur.
- Ensure that during residential events, adults should avoid entering children's bedrooms and should never invite children into their private rooms.
- Give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Recognise the developmental needs and capacity of young people with and without disabilities - avoiding excessive physical activity or competition and not pushing them against their will.
- Secure parental consent in writing for the child's participation, if the need arises to administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment.
- Keeping a written record of any incident or accident that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.
- Being an excellent role model - this includes not smoking, drinking alcohol or using inappropriate language in the company of young people.

Practices to be avoided

The following should be **avoided** except in emergencies. If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable it should be with the full knowledge and consent of the activity leader or the child's parents. For example, a child sustains an injury and needs to go to hospital, or a parent fails to arrive to pick a child up at the end of a session:

- Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others.
- Avoid taking a child in a private vehicle. (Except in the case of work experience students where students are shadowing a member of staff. In these cases students and parents have been informed, and have consented to this, prior to the work experience commencing).

Practices never to be sanctioned

The following should **never** be sanctioned. You should never:

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Share a room with a child.
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching.
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
- Reduce a child to tears as a form of control.
- Allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- Do things of a personal nature for children, which they can do for themselves.
- Invite or allow children to stay with you at your home unsupervised.

N.B. It may sometimes be necessary for staff or volunteers to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are young or are disabled. There is a need to be responsive to a person's reactions. If a person is fully dependent on you, talk with him/her about what you are doing and give choices where possible. This is particularly so if you are involved in any dressing or undressing of outer clothing, or where there is physical contact, spotting, lifting or assisting a child to carry out particular activities. Avoid taking on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained.

Incidents that must be reported/recorded

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If any of the following occur you should report this immediately to the team leader or to another colleague and record the incident. It may also be appropriate to ensure the parents of the child are informed:

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

Use of photographic/filming and digital imaging equipment

All staff and volunteers should be vigilant to ensure that sporting/physical activity events are not used as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of children and young people, and any concerns should be reported to the nominated Welfare Officer.

Videoining/photography as a coaching aid

Children and their parents/carers should be made aware that this is part of the intended coaching programme and such films should be stored safely or destroyed after use. This is also that case when being photographed or videoed for promotional reasons.

Videoining/photography as promotional material

- Where possible do not include the name of a child whose image is being used.
- If naming a child or group of children in an image, only use their first names, as this will reduce the risk of inappropriate, unsolicited attention from people within and outside of the Guernsey Sports Commission.
- Avoid the inclusion of other detailed information about individual children.
- Ask for parental permission to use an image of a young person. This ensures that parents are aware of where and how the image of their child will be used to represent the Guernsey Sports Commission.
- Only use images of young people in suitable dress/kit (including required or recommended safety wear such as shin pads, gum shields etc) to reduce the risk of inappropriate use.
- Images should positively reflect young people's involvement in the activity (e.g. showing smiling participants rather than anxious or unhappy ones) and promote the best aspects of sport.
- With regard to actual content it is difficult to specify exactly what is appropriate given the wide diversity of sports. However there may be some sports activities (e.g. gymnastics or swimming) where the risk of potential misuse is much greater than for other sports. With these sports the content of the image should focus on the activity rather than on a particular child and should avoid full face and body shots. So for example shots of children in a pool would be appropriate, or if poolside, waist or shoulder up.
- Any abuse of images or the use of inappropriate images should be reported to the Child Welfare Officer who will in turn report this to Children's Social care and/or the Police.
- Images will be stored in line with the Guernsey Sports Commission's "Data Protection Policy" and "Retention of Data and Sharing of Data Policy".

Recruitment and training of staff or volunteers

The Guernsey Sports Commission recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children in some way and that reasonable steps should be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children.

Where a member of the Guernsey Sports Commission is required to work unsupervised and in a nature that leaves opportunity for abuse, the following checks must be made:

- A Criminal Records Check must be carried out.
- Where we consider it necessary to seek further information, consent should be obtained from an applicant to seek a verbal or written personal and/or professional reference from up to 2 individuals or organisations.

Where a member of the Guernsey Sports Commission is required to work supervised and in a nature that leaves minimal opportunity for abuse, the following processes must be carried out:

- A risk assessment must be carried out to highlight the times/places in a person's duties it may be possible to carry out abusive behaviour. Additional controls will then be added to make sure the Guernsey Sports Commission do our utmost to safeguard children and vulnerable adults.
- Where we consider it necessary to seek further information, consent should be obtained from an applicant to seek a verbal or written personal and/or professional reference from up to 2 individuals or organisations.

Induction

All staff and volunteers should receive formal or informal induction, during which:

- Their qualifications and experience should be substantiated.
- Our requirements and their responsibilities should be clarified.
- They should agree to work within the Guernsey Sports Commissions' policies and procedures, including this Safeguarding Children Policy in which procedures are explained.

Training

In addition to pre-selection checks, the safeguarding process includes raising awareness through discussion to help staff and volunteers to:

- Analyse their own practice against established good practice, and to ensure their practice is likely to protect them from false allegations.
- Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice or possible abuse.
- Respond to concerns expressed by a child or young person.
- Work safely and effectively with children.

The Guernsey Sports Commission requires that:

- All staff and volunteers, including board members, read the advisory information here in outlining good practice and informing them about what to do if they have concerns about the behaviour of an adult towards a young person or one young person to another;
- All staff and volunteers, including board members, complete the States of Guernsey online child protection training (to be renewed every 3 years).
- All staff who have direct contact with children and young people complete the UK Coaching "Safeguarding & Protecting Children training" (to be renewed every 3 years).
- A member of staff or volunteer at each event has first aid training.

Responding to allegations or suspicions

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It is not the responsibility of anyone working within the Guernsey Sports Commission in a paid or unpaid capacity to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However there is a responsibility to act on any concerns initially through liaison with the Welfare Officer and then through contact with the appropriate authorities.

The Guernsey Sports Commission will assure all staff/volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports his or her concern that another person is, or may be, abusing a child.

Where there is a complaint against a member of the Guernsey Sports Commission there may be three types of investigation:

- A criminal investigation.
- A child protection investigation.
- An internal disciplinary or misconduct investigation.

Action if there are concerns

1. Concerns about poor practice:

- If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice, the nominated Child Welfare Officer will deal with it as a misconduct issue.
- If the allegation is about poor practice by the nominated Welfare Officer, or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to the relevant manager who will decide how to deal with the allegation and whether or not to initiate disciplinary proceedings.

2. Concerns about suspected abuse

By GSC Staff

- Any suspicion that a child has been abused by either a member of staff or a volunteer should be reported to the nominated Child Welfare 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.
- The nominated Child Welfare Officer will refer the allegation to the social services department who may involve the police, or go directly to the police if out-of-hours.
- The parents or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social services department.
- If the nominated Child Welfare Officer is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the associate making the allegation must decide whether direct feedback is sufficient (e.g. possibly in the case of inappropriate handling during an activity without breach of trust or confidence) or whether the report should be made to Social Services or the Police.
- If the child is deemed to be at immediate risk, call the police.

By someone outside of the GSC (by disclosure or suspicion)

- Any suspicion that a child has been abused through suspicion or a disclosure made by that child, must be reported to the nominated Child Welfare Officer, who will take the necessary steps to ensure the safety of the child at risk.
- The nominated Child Welfare Officer will refer the allegation to the social services department who may go to the police, or go directly to the police if out-of-hours.
- If the child is deemed to be at immediate risk, call the police.

Confidentiality

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only. This includes the following people:

- The nominated Welfare Officer (Jenny Murphy or Graham Chester).
- The parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused.
- The person making the allegation.
- Social services/police.
- The alleged abuser (and parents if the alleged abuser is a child).

Recorded information will be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with the Data Protection (Bailiwick of Guernsey) Law, 2017 and the Guernsey Sports Commission “Data Protection Policy” and “Retention of Data and Sharing of Data Policy”. (e.g. that information is accurate, relevant and secure).

Internal inquiries and suspension

The Guernsey Sports Commissions nominated Welfare Officer and senior management will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended from operation pending further inquiries.

- Irrespective of the findings of the social services or police inquiries the Guernsey Sports Commissions nominated Child Welfare Officer will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. The welfare of the child will remain of paramount importance throughout.

Support to deal with the aftermath of abuse:

- Consideration should be given to the kind of support that children, parents and members of staff may need. Use of helplines, support groups and open meetings can help to maintain an open culture and help the healing process. Social Services within the local area will be able to provide advice.
- Consideration should also be given to what kind of support may be appropriate for the alleged perpetrator.

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, we should follow the procedures as detailed above and report the matter to the social services or the police. This is because other children, either within or outside the Guernsey Sports Commission, schools, education and sports coaching, may be at risk from this person. Anyone who has a previous criminal conviction for offences related to abuse is automatically excluded from working with children.

Concerns outside the immediate environment (e.g. a parent, teacher or carer):

- Report your concerns to the nominated Welfare Officer who should decide whether to contact social services or the police as soon as possible.

- If the nominated Child Welfare Officer is not available, the person being told of or discovering the abuse should consider whether to contact social services or the police immediately.
- Social Services and the nominated Welfare Officer will decide how to involve the parents, carer or teacher.
- Maintain confidentiality on a need to know basis only.

Information for social services or the police about suspected abuse:

To ensure that this information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should always be made, ideally at the time of the disclosure/concern, which should include the following:

- The child's name, age and date of birth.
- The child's home address and telephone number.
- Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else.
- The nature of the allegation. Include dates, times, any special factors and other relevant information.
- Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Also any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes.
- Details of witnesses to the incidents.
- The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred.
- Have the parents been contacted?
- If so what has been said?
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so record details.
- If the child was not the person who reported the incident, has the child been spoken to? If so what was said?
- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details.
- Where possible referral to the police or social services should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours and the name of the contact who took the referral should be recorded.

If you are worried about sharing concerns about abuse within the Guernsey Sports Commission, to the nominated Child Welfare Officer about a customer, client or colleague, you can contact social services or the police direct, or the NSPCC Child Protection Helpline on 0808 800 5000, or Childline on 0800 1111.

Action if bullying is suspected

If bullying is suspected, the same procedure should be followed as set out in Responding to suspicions or allegations above.

Advice and action to help the victim and prevent bullying:

- Take all signs of bullying very seriously.
- Encourage all children to speak and share their concerns (it is believed that up to 12 children per year commit suicide as a result of bullying, so if anyone talks about or threatens suicide, seek professional help immediately). Help the victim to speak out and tell the Team Leader and the Nominated Child Welfare Officer and the party leader where appropriate. Create and maintain an open communication environment.

- The Nominated Child Welfare Officer must investigate all allegations appropriately and take action to ensure the victim is safe. This may involve speaking with the victim and the perpetrator(s) separately, offering reassurance that you can be trusted and will help them, although you cannot promise not to tell others.
- Record the incident or suspected incident and keep records of what is said (what happened, by whom, when).
- Report any concerns to the Nominated Child Welfare Officer (wherever the bullying is occurring).

Action towards the bully(ies):

- Talk with the bully(ies), explain the situation, and try to get them to understand the consequences of their behaviour. Consider whether seeking an apology to the victim(s) is appropriate.
- Inform the team leader and/or parents.
- Insist on the return of any 'borrowed' items and that the bully(ies) compensate the victim where appropriate.
- Provide support for the victim's team leader or parent.
- Impose sanctions as you think appropriate or necessary.
- Encourage and support the bully(ies) to change behaviour and offer opportunities for re-engagement within the group and activity.
- Share progress with accompanying team leaders and parents and report as required to the Child Welfare Officer
- Inform all Key associates of action taken if they are to work with either the perpetrator or the victim.
- Record action taken on an incident report form.

Contacting Social Services

Contact details for organisations in Guernsey:

- **Multi Agency Support Hub, Services for Children and Young People - 01481 723182**
- **Emergency Duty Social Worker for Children's Services** (out of hours) 365 days per year, weekends and overnight 5pm to 9am - **01481 725241** (hospital switchboard and ask for duty social worker for children's services).
- **Guernsey Police - 01481 725111 (non emergency) 999 (emergency)**

This Policy is intended to be readable, easily understood and to offer a clear statement of our intentions and actions. It is important that all associates are able to implement this policy. Please contact Jenny Murphy on 01481 747271 or jenny.murphy@guernseysports.com if you would like more information, clearer guidelines, or to suggest appropriate changes to the policy and its wording.

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