Safeguarding Children

Policy and Procedures

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Safeguarding Children Policy Statement

Bristol City Women Football Club, Bristol City Women Professional Game Academy (PGA) and Bristol City Women Emerging Talent Centre (ETC) are collectively referred to as "the Company". All these organisations acknowledge the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The Company has both a moral and legal obligation to ensure a duty of care for children across its services. We are committed to ensuring that all children are protected and kept safe from harm whilst engaged in any services organised and provided by the Company. The Company is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice and local authority requirements.

The Policy recognises that the welfare and interests of children are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that regardless of age, gender, religion or beliefs, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation or socio-economic background, all children have a positive and enjoyable experience of the activities delivered by the Company. We are committed to ensuring that these activities will be in a safe environment, where children are protected from abuse whilst under our care.

The Company acknowledges that some children, young carers, children with medical conditions, including those with a disability 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 Company will:

- Promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children.
- Ensure staff, volunteers and board members understand their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and are provided with appropriate learning opportunities to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect, early interventions (Family Help), and other safeguarding concerns relating to children.
- 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 and retained in accordance with Data Protection Act legislation.

- Ensure that the Company has Safer recruitment procedures to secure the employment/deployment of suitable individuals.

- Ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation.

- Ensure that children, young people, parents/carers are informed about safeguarding via education sessions and through Safeguarding legislation (Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026).

- Ensure that safeguarding policies are shared with all external bodies to allow transparency and "best" working practice.

Any action taken by the Company will be in accordance with current legislation and will consider statutory guidance "Working Together to Safeguard Children" 2026, "Keeping Children Safe in Education" 2026 and Teacher's Standards 2021. We consider these standards as best practice given the fact that we operate in venues where teaching takes place.

This Policy and the procedures will be widely promoted amongst staff and are mandatory for anyone whose role involves working with children in the Company. In accordance with KCSIE 2026 requirements, all staff working in schools/colleges/education settings (which in our case includes PGA academy staff,) are required to read Part One of KCSIE in full. Failure to comply with the Policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the Company.

Principles

This Policy and supporting procedures are based on the following principles:

- The welfare of children is the primary concern (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026).

- All children irrespective of their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, socio-economic status, religious belief and/ or sexual orientation have the right to protection from abuse and harm (The Children's Act 1989 and 2004).

- It is everyone's responsibility to report any concerns about abuse or early help requirements (Family Help) in order that prompt action be taken if required.

- All incidents of alleged poor practice, misconduct, prejudice-based harm, and abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

- All personal data will be processed in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act May 2018, General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Company's Privacy Policy.

Monitoring

This Policy will be reviewed a year after development and then every year after, or in the following circumstances:

- Changes in legislation and/or government guidance (including annual KCSIE updates).
- As required by the Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership (KBSP).
- As a result of any other significant change or event.

Recruitment, Induction, Training, and Qualifications

All staff recruitment is conducted in an open and transparent manner to ensure that the Company has the best staff. Reference should be made to the Company's Safer Recruitment Policy which includes a step-by-step guide to the process (Appendix 14).

Successful candidates are also subject to reference checks, which ask previous employers for their opinion as to whether the candidate is suitable to work with children, if the role requires it and online pre-recruitment due diligence.

The employment of staff, (where the role requires it) is subject to individuals having a relevant and up to date safeguarding qualification and enhanced DBS check with Barred List check when undertaking regulated activity. In line with KCSIE 2026, volunteers teaching, instructing, or supervising children regularly (more than 3 days in 30 days or overnight) are classified under regulated activity and require an Enhanced DBS with Barred List check prior to commencement. The standard recognised welfare qualification for the Company is the FA Safeguarding Children Certificate. The qualification is valid for a period of two years from the date it is attained, and all staff are required to maintain their safeguarding qualification throughout their employment to ensure that it remains up to date and valid.

Safeguarding training forms part of the induction process for every member of staff (and volunteers). Relevant staff members read Part One of KCSIE 2026 in full upon induction and record written or digital confirmation of compliance. A copy of this Policy is also provided and discussed. This allows all staff and volunteers to understand their, and the Company's responsibilities in running our activities in a controlled and safe environment for all participants. The induction process also covers the procedures for making disclosures or referrals, should the need arise and refers to additional policies such as "Raising a Concern" which can be found on the Company's website. Where appropriate related to their role within the Company, staff will also undertake annual PREVENT/ FGM awareness training.

The Company will also undertake annual mandatory face to face in-house training and development on safeguarding and welfare, to ensure that it remains continuously at the top of the agenda for all staff. In addition, and dependent on role, additional online training will be provided via FA/-WSL, and HR platforms.

Disclosure and Barring Service Checks

All staff and volunteers who are working with children and young people, are subject to an enhanced DBS check. This process is further outlined in the Company's Self-declaration form and Criminal Records Policy. These checks will be led by the Senior Safeguarding Manager with the support of the Safeguarding team. In accordance with KCSIE 2026 rules

on Regulated Activity, individuals (including volunteers) must not commence unsupervised roles until a full Enhanced DBS certificate with Barred List clearance is received.

The Company undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any person subject to a Criminal Records Check or self-disclosure based on a conviction or other information revealed.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar individuals from working or volunteering with the Company and any record will be considered as part of a risk assessment process, as outlined in the Safer Recruitment Policy that ensures suitability for the post in question.

The decision on suitability will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of the offences, cautions and other criminal intelligence.

The DBS confirms that all criminal record data will be processed on behalf of the Company in accordance with the provisions of UK data protection legislation and the DBS Code of Practice.

BCWFC Board Members

Ultimately, responsibilities for safeguarding and welfare within the Company, lies with the BCWFC Board Members. The role of the BCWFC Board in the Company is not to oversee the day-to-day management of safeguarding and welfare controls, but to take leadership responsibility for the Company's safeguarding arrangements. This includes governance, leadership oversight, and annual reviews of online monitoring and filtering systems. The day-to-day management for safeguarding controls is delegated to the Senior Safeguarding Manager (SSM) of the Company.

The subject of safeguarding and welfare is monitored by Board Members at quarterly meetings through a standard agenda item. Safeguarding and welfare promoted by the Board Safeguarding Champion.

Senior Safeguarding Manager (SSM)

The Company has a Senior Safeguarding Manager who is supported by Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSO). Safeguarding staff will have undergone the relevant and necessary training. Clear DSO/SSM cover arrangements are documented to guarantee continuous safeguarding cover when the SSM is out of office.

The role of the SSM is:

- To be clear about the Company's responsibilities when running activities for children, young people, and vulnerable adults.
- To help the Company staff and volunteers understand what their duty of care towards children, young people and vulnerable adults means and entails on a day-to-day basis.
- Ensure that proper procedures and policies are in place and are followed with regard to child safeguarding and protection issues.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers receive appropriate training.

The SSM will lead the Company on safeguarding and the welfare of children on a day-to-day basis, supported by an informed and trained workforce. This ensures that risks are managed as effectively as possible and all staff, players and volunteers, project participants and parents are aware of the processes and procedures for reporting concerns should the need arise.

Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSO)

The Designated Safeguarding Officer who will have undergone relevant training and DBS checks. As part of their role, they will have access to continual professional development, supervision and form part of a Safeguarding team (Appendix 3).

The role of the DSO is:

- To be the first port of call for safeguarding issues within their area of the Company.
- To report directly to the Senior Safeguarding Manager any serious safeguarding concerns.
- Ensure that all concerns are reported and recorded appropriately.
- Liaise with and support the SSM.
- Deputise for the SSM when necessary.

Should a member of staff have a concern related to the SSM or Board Safeguarding Champion, they should report this directly to The Local Authority Designated Officer: LADO@bristol.gov.uk Telephone: 0117 903 7795

Safeguarding Terminology

Child

In line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and NSPCC guidance for England, for the purpose of this Policy a child is defined as anyone under the age of 18.

All the policies and procedures in this document refer to children.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare and human rights of individuals especially children, young people and vulnerable adults to live free from abuse, harm, neglect and exploitation. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Contextual Safeguarding

Contextual safeguarding is an approach to safeguarding that recognises that children and young people may be at risk of significant harm not only within their home environment, but also outside it. It looks at how we can best understand these risks, engage with children and young people and help to keep them safe. The approach acknowledges that the different relationships that children and young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse.

Family Help & Early Intervention

In line with KCSIE 2026 and Working Together 2026, early support is structured across universal/community early help and targeted "Family Help" co-ordinated via Local Authority Children's Social Care.

Gender-Questioning Children

Guidance framework ensuring any child questioning their gender is supported with professional curiosity, robust safeguarding, mental health support, and direct parental involvement, while upholding single-sex spaces (toilets, changing rooms, PE) in line with statutory duty. If you think your child is questioning their gender, please reach out to the SSM/DSO.

Harm Threshold

The harm threshold is a key concept in safeguarding that helps organisations determine when a concern about abuse or neglect is significant enough to trigger formal intervention. It distinguishes between low-level concerns, which may indicate inappropriate behaviour but do not meet the criteria for statutory action, and situations where there is a reasonable cause to suspect harm or risk of harm, requiring referral to authorities.

Nudes and Semi-Nudes (Youth-Produced Imagery)

Replaces the legacy terminology of "sexting" or "indecent images". Refers to the creation, sending, or posting of nude or semi-nude images or videos by children, including digitally altered or Artificial Intelligence (AI) deepfake content.

Position of Trust

A "position of trust" exists when one person holds power or influence over another due to the nature of their work or activity. Specifically regarding 16 and 17-year-olds, a person is legally in a position of trust if they regularly coach, teach, train, supervise, or instruct the teenager in a sport or religious activity, and they are fully aware that they hold this regular role. Under UK law, if an adult (aged 18 or over) is in a legally defined position of trust with a 16 or 17-year-old, it is a criminal offense for them to engage in any form of sexual activity or relationship together. Even though 16 is the legal age of consent in the UK, the law strictly overrides this when an unequal power dynamic exists. Because the adult holds significant influence, power, and authority over the teenager, the law deems that the teenager cannot freely give legal consent within that relationship. It is considered an abuse of a position of trust.

Types of Abuse

Abuse can happen on any occasion or in any place where children are present. Abuse is any form of physical, emotional, or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm. It commonly occurs within a relationship of trust or responsibility and represents an abuse of power or a breach of trust. Abuse can happen to an individual regardless of their age, gender, race, or ability.

Somebody may abuse or neglect an individual by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. People may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. People can be abused by adults either male or female, or children.

Any allegations or suspicions of abuse, poor practice or bullying need to be responded to and reported in line with the Company's reporting procedures (Appendix 4 and 5).

There are four main types of abuse: neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, and emotional abuse. Children can also be harmed through poor practice and bullying within an activity setting. Children are also harmed where they live in homes where domestic abuse occurs or if they witness domestic abuse anywhere else.

Appendix 1 looks in detail at the types of abuse and some signs to look out for if staff/volunteers are concerned. This also includes a definition of exploitation.

Unexplainable and/or Persistent Absences

Highlights potential underlying vulnerabilities (abuse, exploitation, mental health) requiring safeguarding investigation. If your child has unexplainable and or persistent school absence, please reach out to the SSM/DSO.

Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers

Staff and volunteers should be positive role models and help build an individual's confidence. The Company seeks to create a culture of safer working practice and where everyone understands that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Staff and Volunteers are expected to:

- Ensure the safety of all children by providing effective supervision, proper pre-planning of sessions, always using safe methods.
- Consider the wellbeing and safety of participants before the development of performance.
- Encourage and guide participants to accept responsibility for their own performance and behaviour.
- Treat all people fairly and ensure they feel valued. Have no favourites.
- Encourage all children not to discriminate on the grounds of religious beliefs, race, sex, gender, sexuality, social classes, or lack of ability.
- Not allow any rough or dangerous play, bullying, or the use of bad language or inappropriate behaviour.
- Be positive, approachable and always promote the objectives of the Company.
- Not let any allegations of abuse of any kind or poor practice go unchallenged or unrecorded.
- Record incidents and accidents in line with the Company's procedures.
- Never use sanctions that humiliate or harm participants.
- Report accidents or incidents of alleged abuse or poor practice to the designated person.
- Administer minor first aid in the presence of others and where required.
- Have access to a telephone for immediate contact to emergency services if required.
- Foster team work to ensure the safety of children in their care.
- Ensure the rights and responsibilities of children are enforced.
- Establish and address the additional needs of disabled participants or other vulnerable groups.
- Not abuse members physically, emotionally, or sexually or in any way.
- Not engage in a sexual relationship with a child or any other person where they are in a position of trust.
- Maintain confidentiality about sensitive information.
- Respect and listen to the opinions of children.
- Develop an appropriate working relationship with participants, based on mutual trust and respect.
- Be a role model, displaying a consistently high standard of behaviour and appearance (disciplined/committed/time keeping); remember people learn by example.
- Refrain from smoking and the consumption of alcohol during activities or sessions.
- Never condone rule violations, rough play or the use of prohibited substances.
- Not spending excessive amounts of time alone with children unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- Never take a child to their home or travel alone with them. In exceptional circumstances the DSO should be consulted, and permission obtained.
- Not administer First Aid involving the removal of an individual's clothing unless in the presence of others or a life and death situation.
- Hold appropriate valid qualifications and insurance cover.
- Make activity fun.
- Always adhere to the Company's social media Policy.

- Ensure a mobile phone free environment by default during instructional or educational sessions, unless explicit approval is granted.

Staff and Volunteers have the right to:

- Access on-going training and information on all aspects of leading/managing activities for children and young people particularly on safeguarding.
- Support in the reporting of suspected abuse or poor practice.
- Access to professional support services.
- Fair and equitable treatment by the Company.
- Be protected from abuse by children, young people, other adults and parents.
- Not to be left vulnerable when working with children.

Any minor misdemeanours and general misbehaviour will be dealt with immediately and should be reported to the Senior Safeguarding Manager and/-or Designated Safeguarding Officer and recorded on My Concern. Serious or persistent breach of the code will result in disciplinary action and could lead to dismissal from the Company. Refer to the Company Raising a Concern and Disciplinary Policies.

Emergency Action and First Aid

All coaches, leaders and members should be prepared with an action plan in the event of an emergency and be aware of our First Aid Procedures (Management of Health and Safety at Work regulations 1999), (appendices 6 and 7). This will include:

- Access to First Aid equipment.
- Telephone contact if the participant is a minor.
- Telephone contact to the Emergency Services.

Procedures

Management of Safeguarding Cases

NSPCC Sport assists sports Companies to achieve an agreed set of standards which provide frameworks for safeguarding the welfare of children and young people involved in sport. A key requirement of the standards is for sports Companies to have procedures and systems in place to effectively manage complaints and concerns about the welfare of children. These are collectively referred to as the case management process.

General Principles of Case Management

1. Where, in a sports context, any issue arises in relation to child protection and safeguarding, the welfare of children shall be the paramount consideration.

2. Any investigation or inquiry is to proceed upon the basis that the primary consideration will be a determination of the risk posed to children.

3. Unless the determination finds no, or an insignificant, risk, effective steps must be taken to manage or reduce the risk.

4. Individuals about whom there are concerns should be treated fairly and honestly and should be provided with support throughout the process.

Investigation

1. Every investigation or inquiry must be sensitive to the welfare of the child during its processes and, always, hold central the need to keep the interests of those directly involved as paramount.
2. Where issues other than risk to children are under consideration in any investigation or inquiry, such issues must remain subordinate to the requirement to determine the risk posed to children.

Risk Assessment

1. The assessment of risk involves consideration of the actual or potential harm that an individual poses to a child.

2. The assessment of risk does not involve making a finding based upon either the criminal or civil standards of proof (i.e., certainty or "the balance of probabilities"). The assessment requires a defensible decision that a risk does or does not exist and, where it does, a determination of the extent of such risk.

3. Save in exceptional cases, the assessment will not require the production of a formal risk assessment report. A record of the decision and the factors considered will be recorded centrally on My Concern.

Risk Management

1. The steps taken to address any perceived risk to children must have regard to the nature and extent of the risk as well as to any particular and relevant aspects of the activity in question and, in the light of this, must seek to ensure that such steps will be effective.

2. In cases where the perceived risk is low, and no criminal or disciplinary charge could be made out, it may be nonetheless necessary to impose stringent restrictions on an individual or remove his/her ability to participate in the activity in question.

Responding to Disclosure

If a child informs a member of staff directly or a member of staff identifies that they are concerned about someone's behaviour towards them, this is known as disclosure. This disclosure may be relating to an incident or incidents either during the Company activity, or outside of the activity environment. The person receiving the disclosure should:

- React calmly so as not to frighten the individual.

- Tell the individual that he or she is not to blame and that they were right to share their concerns.

- Take what the individual says seriously.

- If the individual needs immediate medical treatment, take them to hospital or telephone for an ambulance, inform doctors of concern and ensure they are aware that it is a child protection issue (as outlined in the referral procedure diagram - Appendix 4).

- Ensure the immediate safety of the individual in question.

- Avoid leading the individual in questioning and keep any questions to the absolute minimum. Ask only what is necessary to ensure a clear understanding of what has been said.

- Re-assure the individual but do not make promises of confidentiality or outcome, which might not be feasible in the light of subsequent developments.

- In the event of suspicion of sexual abuse do not let the child bath or shower until given permission to do so. Washing can destroy evidence.

- Inform parents/carers immediately unless there is a specific reason not to e.g., the individual has named the parent/carer as the abuser. If this is the case, then contact the Company Senior Safeguarding Manager. If they are unavailable, staff should contact local Social Care Services or the Police for guidance.

- The judgment about whether an incident is one of abuse or poor practice may not be able to be made at the point of referral, but only after the collection of relevant information by someone appropriately trained and skilled.

- Make a full written record of what was said, seen and heard as soon as you can (using the Company reporting system My Concern). In the case of a serious incident with a threat to life, the emergency services should be called.

In the Event of a Disclosure, staff should not:

- Dismiss the concern.

- Panic.

- Allow your shock or distaste to show.

- Probe for more information than is offered.

- Speculate or make assumptions.

- Make negative comments about the alleged abuser.

- Make promises or agree to keep secrets.

- Ask the child or any witnesses to sign your written information as this may be significantly detrimental to any subsequent police investigation.

Do not take photographs of any alleged injuries. Any such recording must only be done by an approved medical or other practitioner, following referral.

Other Disclosures

There may be instances where a fellow member of staff, friend or carer of a child may disclose a concern about the welfare of a young person.

In this instance the same protocol should be followed regarding reporting procedures, and it should be made clear on the referral form by whom the disclosure was made.

This Safeguarding Children Policy should be made available for all key stakeholders upon request, to ensure individuals and other companies are aware of the Company reporting procedure for safeguarding concerns.

Reporting Procedure

My Concern

This is an electronic recording system used Company wide. It enables all staff members to record both high, and low-level concerns wherever they are working both on and off site. All concerns register immediately on the system enabling the Senior Safeguarding Manager to triage and categories concerns. These are then classed as high, medium, or low-level risk. Staff are encouraged to use "My Concern" to record any incidents no matter how small and insignificant up to and including high level. This allows instant notification of serious issues and enables patterns of inappropriate behaviour to be identified. "My Voice" has been introduced onto the Company website enabling any stakeholder to send in an anonymous referral should they prefer.

High Level Concerns

All allegations or suspicions and concerns are to be treated seriously. No abuse is acceptable. Some Safeguarding concerns may indicate the commission of a criminal offence and must be reported to the Police as soon as possible.

It is the responsibility of the individual employee or volunteer to take a lead on reporting all concerns to the Company Senior Safeguarding Manager or Designated Safeguarding Officer. The individual employee should assist in any further action required on behalf of the Company. A copy of the referral process for staff and volunteers is available in Appendices 4 and 5.

Information should be shared with the Senior Safeguarding Manager, who must approve of any actions to be taken and any documentation or correspondence being sent out.

Employees with concerns should discuss them with the Designated Safeguarding Officer immediately. If the Designated Safeguarding Officer is not available, then any concerns should be discussed with the Senior Safeguarding Manager who will then seek advice, if necessary, from other nominated welfare professionals (Bristol City Council, the Football Association, WSL).

Volunteers with concerns should discuss these discreetly with their coordinator or the Designated Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible after the abuse or suspicions of abuse are observed. If unavailable, then any concerns should be discussed directly with the Senior Safeguarding Manager.

Concerns about colleagues should be addressed initially with the Designated Safeguarding Officer who in turn will discuss with the Senior Safeguarding Manager. If this is not possible

or the concern is about the Designated Safeguarding Officer then speak directly to the Senior Safeguarding Manager or Bristol City Council, Gloucestershire County FA, or the WSL. All staff concerns should be logged by the relevant DSO on the staff "My Concern" site. There is also an anonymous form that can be used.

Where there is evidence of immediate harm then the employee should phone 999 and report the incident to the Police.

Low Level Concerns

These are concerns that may not meet the harm threshold or need a referral to an outside agency but that may cause a sense of unease or a "nagging doubt". These could be related to a member of staff being inconsistent with the "Code of Conduct.", inappropriate outside work, over friendly with children, taking photographs on mobile phones or general poor practice around children and young people.

The Company promotes an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about adults working in or on behalf of the Company are taken seriously, dealt with promptly and appropriately. This will minimise the risk of abuse, identify inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviours and set clear professional boundaries which reflect the ethos and values of the Company.

All low-level concerns should be recorded promptly on "My Concern". These will be reviewed, categorised and a course of action identified by the Senior Safeguarding Manager in consultation with the Designated Company Safeguarding Officer.

Information Sharing

If there is a reasonable concern that a child may be at risk of significant harm this will always override a professional agency requirement to keep information confidential.

If the Company is approached about sharing information, the following will be considered:

- What information do they need?
- Why they need it?
- What will they do with the information?
- Who else needs to be informed if concerns about the individual persist?

If we are asked to provide information, we will never refuse solely on the grounds that all information is confidential.

The Company will consider:

- What information the individual in question has given permission to use.
- Any perceived risk to the individual which would warrant breaching confidentiality.
- Any relevant information on risk to the individual, which would allow another agency to offer appropriate help and services or take action to reduce risk to the child.
- Whether to ask advice from Children Social Services, County FA, or the WSL.

The Company will record when, what, why, and with who information has been shared; or why sharing was refused. This is recorded as the Company may be required to justify reasons later. Staff should always seek advice if unsure and never refuse to provide information without considering the risks of not sharing. All decisions on information sharing will ultimately fall with the Company's Senior Safeguarding Manager.

The Company will ensure their Safeguarding Policies are shared with all stakeholders and commissioned bodies to allow transparency and close working practice.

Guidance for Making a Referral

Bristol

- (9.00-5.00) 01179036444
- Out of normal hours 01454615165 Emergency Duty Team

www.bristol.gov.uk

Bath

- 01225396312
- Out of hours 01225396313

http://www.bathnes.gov.uk

Cardiff

- Office hours 02920536490
- Emergency out of hours 02920788570

www.cardifff.gov.uk

North Somerset

- Mon-Fri (8.00-6.00) 01275888860
- Out of hours emergency duty team 01454615165.

www.nsscp.co.uk

Gloucestershire

- 01452 426565 (office hours)
- 01452 614194 (out of hours)
  childrenshelpdask@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Newport and Gwent Children Social care

- 0800 3284432 (free phone in office hours)
- 01633 656656 (out of hours duty officer)
  Home | Newport City Council

South Gloucestershire

- Mon-Fri – (9.00-5.00) 01454866000
- Out of hours/weekends (9.00-4.30) 01454615165

www.southglos.gov.uk

Vale of Glamorgan

- Office hours 01446725202
- Emergency out of hours 02920788570

www.cardiffandvalersb.co.uk

Warwickshire Referrals

- Office hours 01926 414144
- Out of hours 019268 86922 -Emergency Duty Team

  https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/childrens-social-care

Worcestershire Referrals

- Office hours 01905 822666.
- Out of hours 01905 768020

www.worcestershire.gov.uk

When making a referral regarding child protection concerns, it is important to have the following information wherever possible readily available for the duty social worker:

- Name, date of birth, ethnic origin, gender of the child, address, and telephone numbers.
- The reasons for your concern.
- Injuries and/or other indicators observed.
- The child's first language.
- Details of any specific needs of the child, e.g., disability, etc.
- Details of family members, if known.
- Other agencies, professionals involved.
- Family doctor.

Staff in children's teams will make enquiries with other agencies who may have information regarding the child and family. Based on the information gathered, they will then make an initial assessment on what further action is necessary or appropriate.

Whenever children's teams receive information about a possible criminal offence against a child, they will share the information with the Police at the earliest opportunity, and a decision will be made jointly on how to proceed with the enquiries.

Following the referral of a child, the referrer and the children's team must be clear about who will be taking what action.

Professionals who contact a children's team to make a referral must confirm the details of this in writing within 24 hours addressed to the children's team for that locality, using the Confirmation of Child Protection Referral form.

The team should acknowledge a written referral within one working day of receiving it, so if we have not heard within three working days, contact the children's team again.

The Senior Safeguarding Manager for the Company is Melissa Dray

Email: melissa.dray@bristolcitywomenfc.com Tel: 07867 868912

Other key contacts are:

- Gloucestershire FA DSO - Liz Barnett 07960 500130
- Somerset DSO - Shirley Needham 01458 837034/07535 664988
- WSL Safeguarding Manager - Sandy Gill 07966 375896
- The FA Safeguarding Team - 0800 169 1863 Email: Safeguarding@TheFA.com
- NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000
- ChildLine 0800 1111 / www.childline.org.uk
- Kidscape www.kidscape.org.uk

If you have concern that a child is being harmed because of abuse or neglect, you must not keep these concerns to yourself. Keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility. Staff must ensure that they speak to the appropriate staff member in the Company who can listen to and record the concerns and then take appropriate action.

Appendix 1 - Safeguarding Indicators

Neglect

This is when adults consistently or repeatedly fail to meet an individual's basic physical and/or psychological needs which could result in the serious impairment of the individual's health or development e.g., failure to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing; failing to protect someone from physical harm or danger; or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include refusal to give love, affection, and attention.

Neglect in sport or physical activity could include a coach or other member of staff: repeatedly failing to ensure people are safe; exposing them to undue cold, heat or extreme weather conditions without ensuring adequate clothing or hydration; exposing them to unnecessary risk of injury e.g., by ignoring safe practice guidelines; failing to ensure the use of safety equipment; or by requiring children and young people to participate when injured or unwell.

NEGLECT	
Examples include	**Signs include**
● Withholding help or support necessary to carry out daily living tasks. ● Ignoring medical and physical care needs. ● Failing to provide access to health, social or educational support. ● The withholding of medication, nutrition, and heating. ● Keeping someone in isolation. ● Failure to intervene in situations that are dangerous to the vulnerable person Inadequate supervision and guidance – leaving the child to cope alone, abandoning them, or leaving them with inappropriate carers and failing to provide appropriate boundaries about behaviours such as underage sex or alcohol.	● Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from others. ● Dirty or 'smelly'. ● Loss of weight or being constantly underweight. ● Inappropriate dress for the weather. ● Complaining of being tired all the time. ● Having few friends. ● Worsening of health conditions. ● Mentioning their being left alone or unsupervised. ● Skin infections. ● Lack of response to stimuli or contact. ● Poor skin condition(s). ● Anxiety. ● Distressed. ● Child moves away from parent under stress. ● Little or no distress when separated from primary carer. ● Inappropriate emotional responses. ● Language delay.

Physical Abuse

When someone physically hurts or injures another person by hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, biting, scalding, suffocating, drowning or otherwise causing harm. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to someone they are looking after.

Physical abuse in sport or physical activity may include: be when the nature and intensity of training or competition exceeds the capacity of the child's immature and growing body; where coaches encourage the use of drugs or harmful substances to enhance performance or delay puberty; if athletes are required to participate when injured; or when sanctions used by coaches imposed involve inflicting pain.

PHYSICAL ABUSE	
Examples include	**Signs include**
● Shaking. ● Pinching. ● Slapping. ● Force-feeding. ● Biting. ● Burning or Scalding. ● Causing needless physical discomfort. Inappropriate restraint. ● Locking someone in a room.	● Unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body. ● Frequent visits to the GP or A&E. ● An injury inconsistent with the explanation offered. ● Fear of parents or carers being approached for an explanation. ● Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts. ● Flinching when approached. ● Reluctance to get changed or wearing long sleeves in hot weather. ● Depression. ● Withdrawn behaviour or other behaviour change. ● Running away from home/ residential care. ● Distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.

Sexual Abuse

This is where children are abused by adults (both male and female) or other children who use them to meet their own sexual needs. This could include full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse, kissing and sexual fondling. Showing individuals pornographic material (books, videos, pictures) or taking pornographic images of them are also forms of sexual abuse.

In sport or physical activity, coaching techniques which involve physical contact with others can create situations where sexual abuse can be disguised and may therefore go unnoticed. The power and authority of, or dependence on, the coach if misused, may also lead to abusive situations developing. Contacts made within sport and pursued e.g., through texts, social media or other messaging platforms have been used to groom children for abuse.

SEXUAL ABUSE	
Examples include	**Signs include**
● Rape and other sexual offences. ● For vulnerable adults, sexual activity including sexual contact and non-sexual contact that the person does not want, to which they have not consented, could not consent, or were pressured into consenting to. ● Being encouraged or enticed to touch the abuser. ● Coercing the victim into watching or participating in pornographic videos, photographs, or internet images. ● Any sexual relationship that develops where one is in a position of trust, power, or authority.	● Pain or itching in the genital/anal areas. ● Bruising or bleeding near genital/anal areas. ● Sexually transmitted disease. ● Vaginal discharge or infection. ● Stomach pains. ● Discomfort when walking or sitting down. ● Pregnancy. ● Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour, e.g., becoming aggressive or withdrawn. ● Fear of being left with a specific person or group of people. ● Nightmares. ● Leaving home. ● Sexual knowledge which is beyond their age or development age. ● Sexual drawings or language. ● Bedwetting. ● Saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about. ● Self- harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts. ● Eating problems such as overeating or anorexia.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of an individual so as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the person's emotional development. It may involve conveying to people that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on someone or even the over protection of an individual. It may involve causing people to feel frightened or in danger by being constantly shouted at, threatened, or taunted which may make the person very nervous and withdrawn. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child.

Emotional abuse in sport or physical activity may occur: if people are subjected to constant criticism, name-calling, sarcasm, bullying, racism; if people are pressured to perform to unrealistically high expectations; or when their value or worth is dependent on sporting success or achievement.

EMOTIONAL/PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE	
Examples include	**Signs include**
● Intimidation and/or threats. ● Bullying. ● Rejection. ● Shouting. ● Indifference and the withdrawal of approval. ● Denial of choice. ● Deprivation of dignity or privacy. ● The denial of human and civil rights. ● Harassment. ● Being made to fear for one's wellbeing.	● A failure to thrive or grow. ● Sudden speech disorders. ● Developmental delay, either in terms of physical or emotional progress. ● Behaviour change. ● Being unable to play or socialise with others. ● Fear of making mistakes. ● Self-harm. ● Fear of parent or carer being approached regarding their behaviour. ● Confusion.

Exploitation

Exploitation is defined as where an individual or a group take advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child, young person or adult at risk into activities that benefit the perpetrator or facilitator. This can be on or offline. It can include issues that relate to criminality, such as Child Criminal Exploitation, County Lines, Modern Slavery and Child Sexual Exploitation. The exploitation may involve violence, threats or financial gain.

Exploitation	
Examples include	**Signs include**
● Cheap labour. ● Child labour. ● Slavery. ● Sex tourism. ● Forced marriage. ● Illegal adoption. ● Grooming. ● Criminal activities. ● Pornography.	● Unexplained injuries, ill health, or suspicion of assault. ● Association with controlling individuals or groups. ● Concerning use of the internet, social media, or mobile phones. ● Unexplained acquisition or loss of money and personal items. ● Persistently going missing from school or home. ● Excessive receipt of texts or phone calls. ● Unhealthy or inappropriate sexual behaviour. ● Frequently staying out late or overnight with no explanation. ● Being secretive about who they are talking to and where they are going. ● Using more than one phone.

Additional Safeguarding and Welfare Considerations

Adultification

A form of bias where children from Black, Asian and minoritized ethnic communities are perceived as being more streetwise, more grown-up, less innocent, and less vulnerable than other children.

Bullying

Bullying by peers can occur whenever children and young people come together. Bullying can take many forms and is harmful to the victim. It may be physical e.g., hitting; online or cyber e.g., abusive messages, comments, or images on social media; involve damage or theft of property; based on someone's gender, ethnicity, sexuality or disability; or about their physical ability.

Child Criminal Exploitation and County Lines

Child criminal exploitation is defined as the act of using a child (under 18 years old) to commit crimes, often involving coercion or manipulation. It includes scenarios such as forcing a child to work on illegal activities like cannabis farming or selling drugs. This form of exploitation is recognized as a type of child abuse, where individuals or groups take advantage of an imbalance of power to control or deceive the child. County lines is an example of Child Criminal Exploitation. This term is used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs. They are likely to exploit children. Child Criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact but can occur using technology.

Child Sexual Exploitation

This is a form of Child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or groups of people take advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity in exchange for something the victim needs and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may be sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child exploitation can even take place through the use of technology.

Cyberbullying

This is defined as the use of technology to harass, threaten, embarrass, humiliate, spread rumours or target another person. Refer to the Company's "Email and Internet policy". Bullying because of discrimination occurs when motivated by prejudice against certain people because of an individual's ethnic origin, colour, nationality, race, religion or belief, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, or disability.

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse doesn't just affect adults, it has a direct and serious impact on children, even if they never see the violence happen. Simply living in a home where domestic abuse occurs is considered a form of harm. Children are recognised by law as victims when they see, hear or experience the effects of domestic abuse.

What is Domestic Abuse?

Domestic abuse is any controlling, coercive, threatening, violent or abusive behaviour between adults who are partners, ex-partners, or family members.
It can involve:

- Physical violence.
- Emotional or verbal abuse.
- Controlling behaviour (e.g., isolating someone from friends/family).
- Financial control.
- Threats and intimidation.

Children are recognised by law as victims when they see, hear or experience the effects of domestic abuse.

How Domestic Abuse Links to Neglect:

Domestic abuse can significantly affect a parent or carer's ability to provide consistent, safe care.

Why it Often Results in Neglect:

- A parent may be too frightened, overwhelmed or controlled to meet the child's basic needs (food, clothing, supervision, routines).
- The abusive adult may restrict access to money, making it hard to buy essentials.
- Frequent conflict and crisis can make the home unpredictable, with children left unsupervised or caring for themselves.
- Parents might be emotionally drained, distracted or injured, affecting their capacity to care.

Impact on the Child:

- Going without meals, clean clothes or medical appointments
- Irregular school attendance
- Living in a chaotic or unsafe home environment

How Domestic Abuse Links to Emotional Abuse:

Even if a child is never physically harmed, domestic abuse can be deeply emotionally damaging.

How Emotional Harm Occurs:

- Children often see or hear the abuse, or sense fear in the household.
- They may feel responsible, guilty or anxious, trying to protect the abused parent.
- The abusive adult may also be emotionally harsh or frightening towards the child.
- Constant stress in the home can affect the child's self-esteem, attachment and emotional development.

Impact on the Child:

- Anxiety, nightmares or sleep problems.
- Low confidence or withdrawal.

- Aggressive behaviour or difficulties managing emotions.
- Trouble concentrating at school.
- Feeling constantly “on alert”.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Involves procedures that intentionally alter or injure female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The procedure has no health benefits for girls or women. The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 makes it illegal to practice FGM in the UK or to take girls who are British nationals or permanent residents in the UK abroad for FGM.

Forced Marriage

A marriage in which one or both spouses do not consent to the marriage and duress is involved. This is different from an arranged marriage where both parties agree. A forced marriage is a criminal offence (The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014) and can result in up to 7yrs in prison.

Grooming

Grooming is defined as developing the trust of an individual and/or their family for the purposes of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, or trafficking. Grooming can happen both online and in person.

Hazing

Any rituals, initiation activities, action, or situation with or without consent, which recklessly, intentionally or unintentionally endangers the physical or emotional well-being of vulnerable groups.

Infatuations

Vulnerable groups may develop an infatuation with a member of staff who works with them. There is a high risk that words or actions may be mis-interpreted, and allegations made against staff.

Increased Risk to Vulnerable Children

There are many issues that may contribute to child abuse, but some factors increase the risk to children and make them more vulnerable to abuse. They can be found in the background of parents, in the environmental situation and in attributes of the child themselves (SEND Code of Practice Guidelines 2015).

Parental factors:

- Parent has a mental illness.
- Parent is abusing drugs or alcohol.
- Parent has already abused a child.
- Pregnancy was not wanted.
- Parent has a background of abuse when growing up.
- Young, unsupported mother often with low education.
- Parents have unrealistic expectations of the child and lack parenting knowledge.
- Parent is isolated and has little support.
- Parent has a learning difficulty.

Environmental Factors:

- Overcrowding in the house.
- Poverty or lack of opportunity to improve the family's resources.
- Domestic violence is present.
- A non-biological adult (i.e., unrelated) living in the house.
- Family is experiencing multiple sources of stress.

Making or Sharing of Nudes or Semi Nudes

Making or Sharing of Nudes or Semi Nudes (Youth-Produced Imagery & AI Deepfakes)
This is where a person sends, receives, or creates sexually explicit or suggestive images, including AI-generated deepfakes (see appendices 10, 11a and 11b). Refer to UK Child Council for Internet Safety (UKCCIS) guidance and KCSIE 2026.

Mental Health

Mental illness, also called mental health disorders, refers to a wide range of mental health conditions — disorders that affect your mood, thinking and behaviour. Examples of mental illness include depression, anxiety disorders, schizophrenia, eating disorders and addictive behaviours. Refer to the Company Mental Health Policy.

Negative experiences and distressing life events can affect the mental health of us all. Anyone who is struggling under the current circumstances should be advised to contact the Company safeguarding staff. Support can also be accessed through a number of national organisations including:

The Samaritans https://www.samaritans.org	Tel: 116 123
ChildLine: https://www.childline.org.uk	Tel: 0800 1111
NSPCC: https://www.nspcc.org.uk	Tel: 0808 800 5000
Mind: https://www.mind.org.uk	Tel: 0300 123 3393
PFA: https://www.thepfa.com/wellbeing	Tel: 07500 000 777

Online Safety

Online safety (or e-safety) refers to the practice of protecting individuals from risks while using the internet, covering personal information, mental well-being, and digital property. It focuses on awareness, education, and security measures to ensure safe, responsible, and confident use of digital technologies and platforms. Misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories are recognised as safeguarding harms. Content is an online risk. The use of AI and deepfakes is also recognized as a statutory safeguarding risk. Annual Filtering and Monitoring checks are reviewed under Board oversight.

Key Aspects of Online Safety

- **Protection from Harms:** Protecting against online bullying, grooming, scams, and illegal content.
- **Data Security:** Safeguarding personal information and privacy, such as passwords, addresses, and financial details.
- **Awareness and Education:** Knowing how to recognise risks and respond to threats when using internet-connected devices.
- **Regulatory Measures:** Laws such as the UK's Online Safety Act 2023 compel platforms to keep users safe from harmful content.

Peer- on-peer abuse also known as child-on-child abuse

Children and young people can be taken advantage of or harmed by adults and by other children. Peer-on-peer abuse is any form of physical, sexual, emotional, and financial abuse, and coercive control, exercised between Children and within Children's relationships (both intimate and non-intimate).

Poor Practice

Poor practice is behaviour of an individual in a position of responsibility which falls below the Company's required standard. Poor practice may not be immediately dangerous or intentionally harmful to an individual, however, is likely to set a poor example.

Poor practice is potentially damaging to the individual, the Company and to those who experience it. For example, leading a group with alcohol on the breath, smoking, swearing in front of others, or not paying due care and attention to participants all constitute poor practice.

Poor practice can sometimes lead to or create an environment conducive to more serious abuse. It may also lead to suspicions about the individual's motivation, even where no harm is intended. For example, if a member of staff is giving one child too much attention, regularly transports children in their car, or encourages physical contact with children without obvious justification.

Prevent

Prevent is part of the UK's national counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST, and focuses on safeguarding individuals who may be susceptible to radicalisation. Its objectives include:

- Early identification of individuals at risk of radicalisation.
- Providing support and interventions to prevent involvement in terrorism.
- Protecting communities from extremist influences.

Prevent operates locally through multi-agency partnerships, including local authorities, police, schools, health services, charities, and community organisations. In England and Wales, the Channel programme provides tailored support to individuals at risk, while in Scotland, a similar programme is called the Prevent Multi-Agency Panel (PMAP).

Private fostering

A privately fostered child is a child under 16 yrs (18 yrs if disabled) who is cared for by an adult who is not a parent or close relative where the child is to be cared for in that home for 28 days or more. Should any child be placed in a Host Family who meets the above criteria the Company will be required to work with the local authority to ensure that all legislative and local procedures are met (Private Fostering Regulations 2005).

Radicalisation

The process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism. Anybody from any background can become radicalised. The grooming of children and/or adults at risk for the purposes of involvement in extremist activity is a serious safeguarding issue.

Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG)

Violence against women and girls covers a wide range of crime types and behaviours that are disproportionately experienced by women and perpetrated by men. Together, domestic abuse, stalking and sexual assault affected 5.1 million victims in the year ending March 2025 and this does not include victims of other VAWG crimes and behaviours, such as sexual harassment, online and technology-facilitated abuse, and teenage relationship abuse.

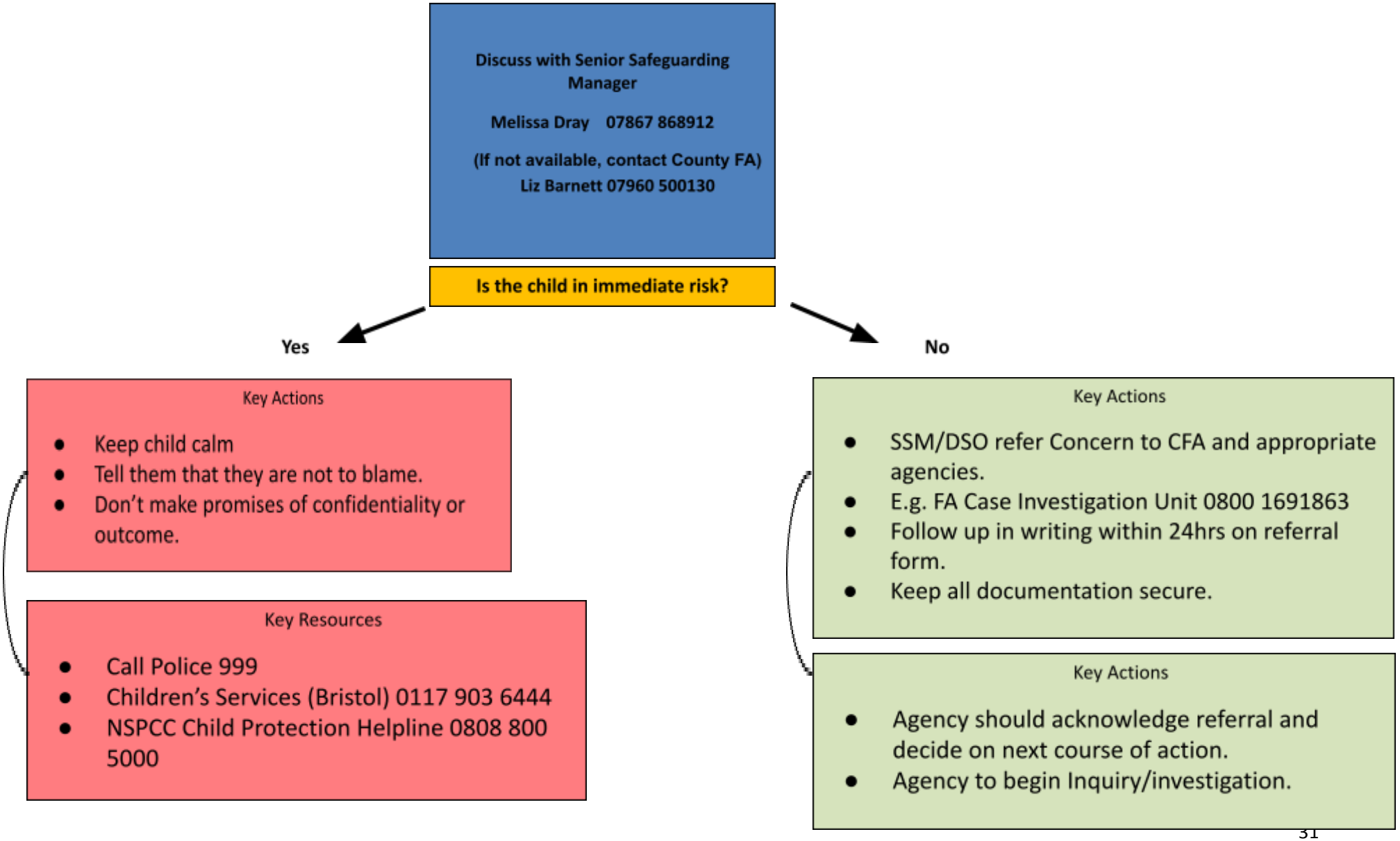
VAWG crimes and behaviours include but are not limited to:

- Domestic abuse.
- Stalking.
- Sexual violence, including rape and other sexual offences.
- Sexual harassment.
- 'Honour'- based abuse (HBA), including forced marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM).
- Online and technology-facilitated abuse, including 'cyberflashing' and non-consensual intimate image abuse.
- Fatal VAWG, including domestic homicides, femicides, and suicides and sudden or unexplained deaths which occur in the context of abuse.
- Sexual exploitation, including in relation to prostitution and human trafficking.
- Spiking.

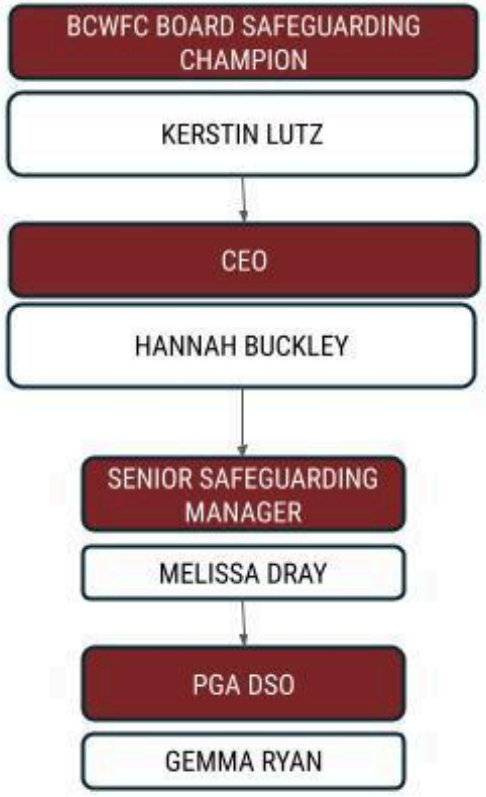
Additional Sources of Information

Additional information that may contribute to staff/volunteers' ability to safeguard children and young people may be gathered from a variety of different sources such as during recruitment, induction, school records, or external agency involvement. Any additional vulnerabilities should be recorded and shared with the Designated Safeguarding Officer who will take appropriate action.

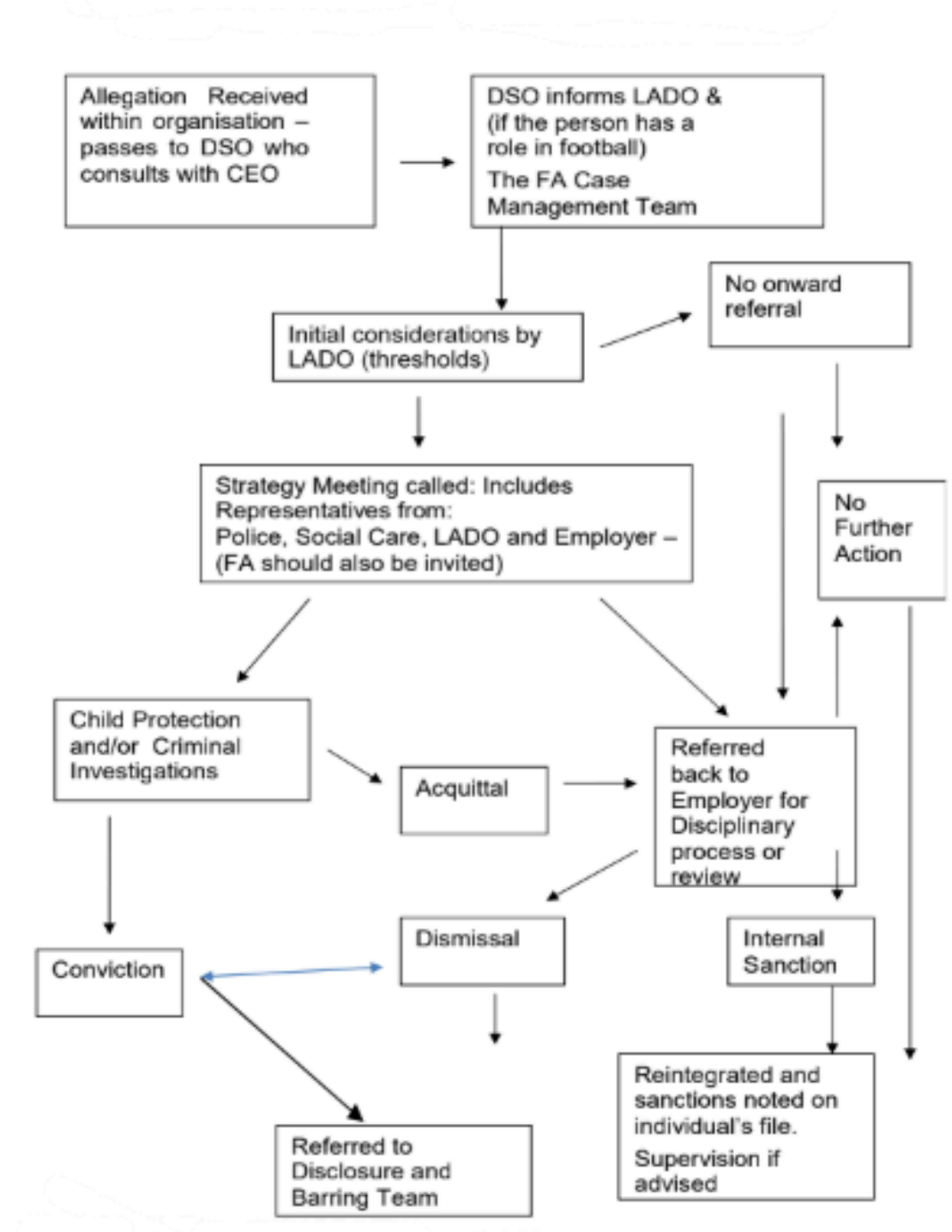
Appendix 2 - Overview of Dealing with Possible Child Abuse in a Football Setting



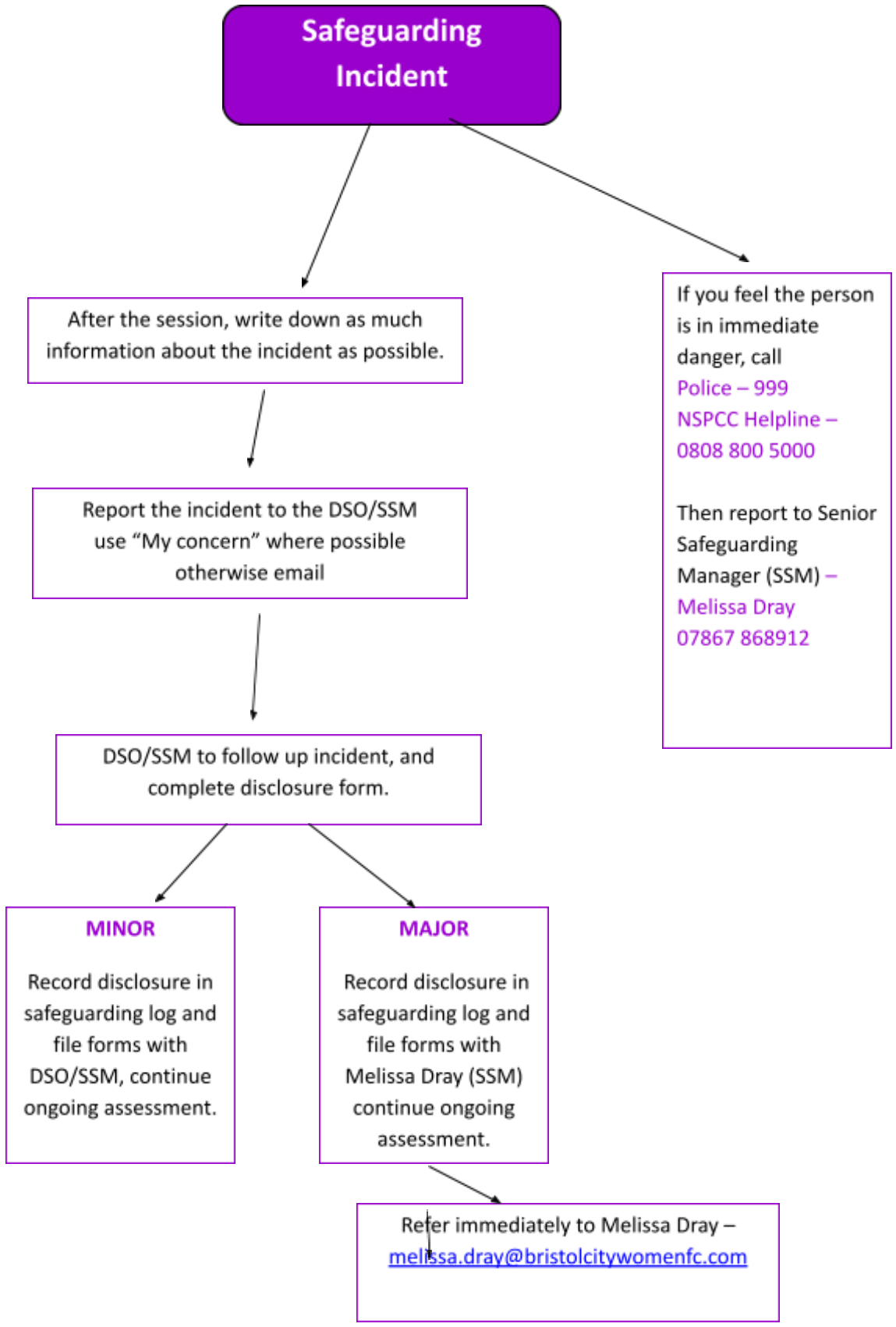
Appendix 3 - BCWFC Safeguarding Governance



Appendix 4 - Serious Staff Safeguarding Allegation Management



Appendix 5 - Incident Reporting Flow Chart



Appendix 6 - Summary of Allegations Management Procedures

All Staff – Concern about a member of staff, includes volunteers working with children, or a breach of professional boundaries with any learner.

If a professional receives an allegation or has a concern about a member of staff working or volunteering with children or learners (regardless of their age) and that concern could amount to:

- a member of staff or volunteer has behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child.
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they are unsuitable for work with children.
- a breach of professional boundaries in respect of dealing with a learner

THE PROFESSIONAL SHOULD



All Staff – Report the concern(s)

Report the concerns to SSM or DSO if not implicated in the allegation or CEO if implicated.



All Staff - Record the concern on "My Concern"

Record the concern on "My Concern". Include the nature and circumstances surrounding the concern, including any previous concerns. Include where the concern came from and brief details only. If the member of staff is known to work with partners of the Company, then a confidential discussion should take place with the DSO of that organisation.



SSM or DSO or Senior Member of staff - seek advice before proceeding.

Always contact the LADO for advice prior to investigating the allegation. This is important as it might meet the criminal threshold and could interfere with a police or social care investigation.
LADO-Nicola Laird nicola.laird@bristol.gov.uk

The LADO will offer advice on any immediate action required and will assist with employment and safeguarding issues.



SSM or Senior Member of staff- Allegation Management Process.

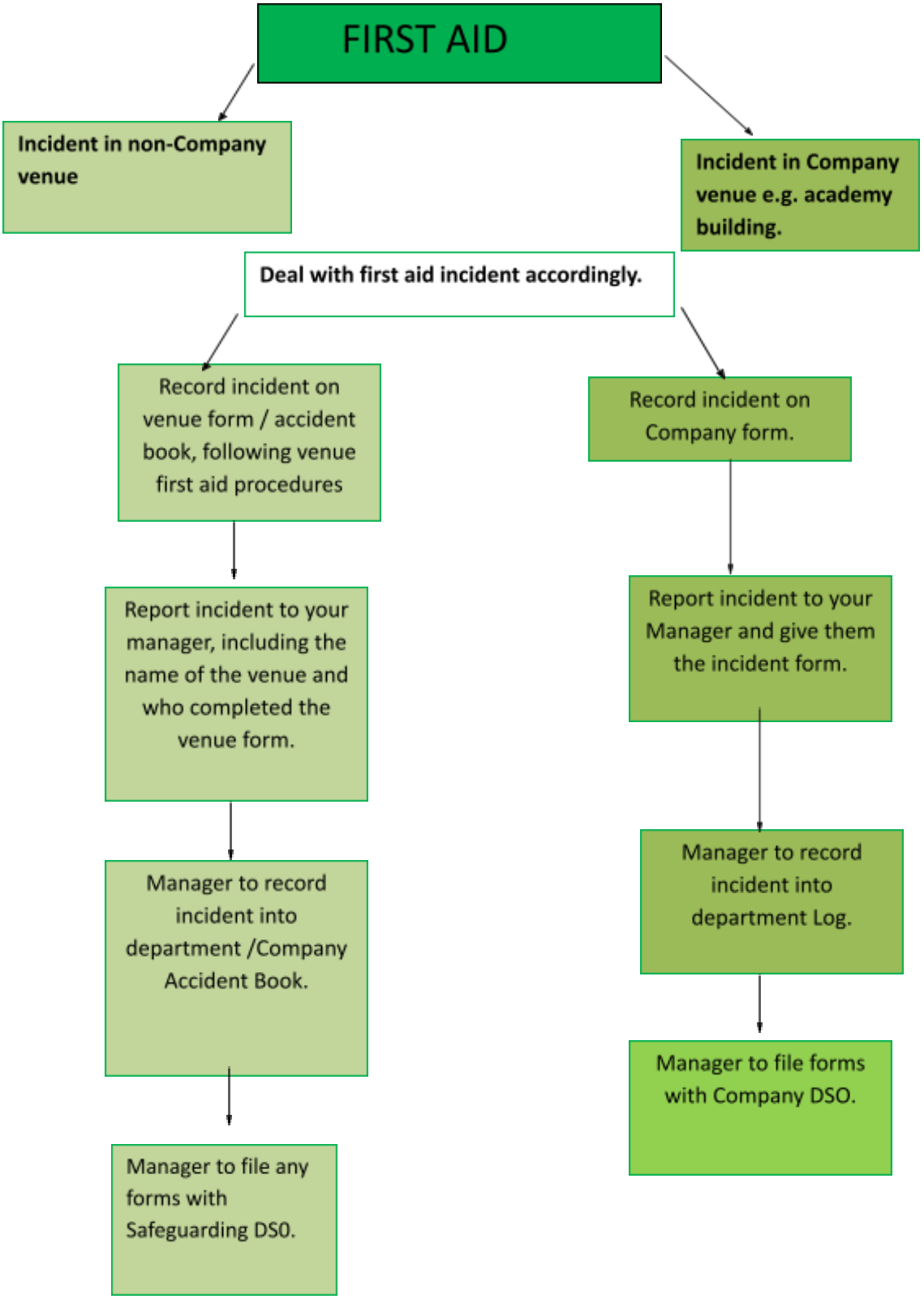
If, after discussion with the LADO the allegation meets the criteria a multi-agency meeting will be convened to which you will be invited. This may result in a criminal investigation, a Social Care investigation and/ or an investigation to inform whether disciplinary action is required.
If it is agreed that the allegation does not meet the criteria, the LADO will record the initial discussion and send it to you for your records. Any further action will be taken within your setting if necessary.



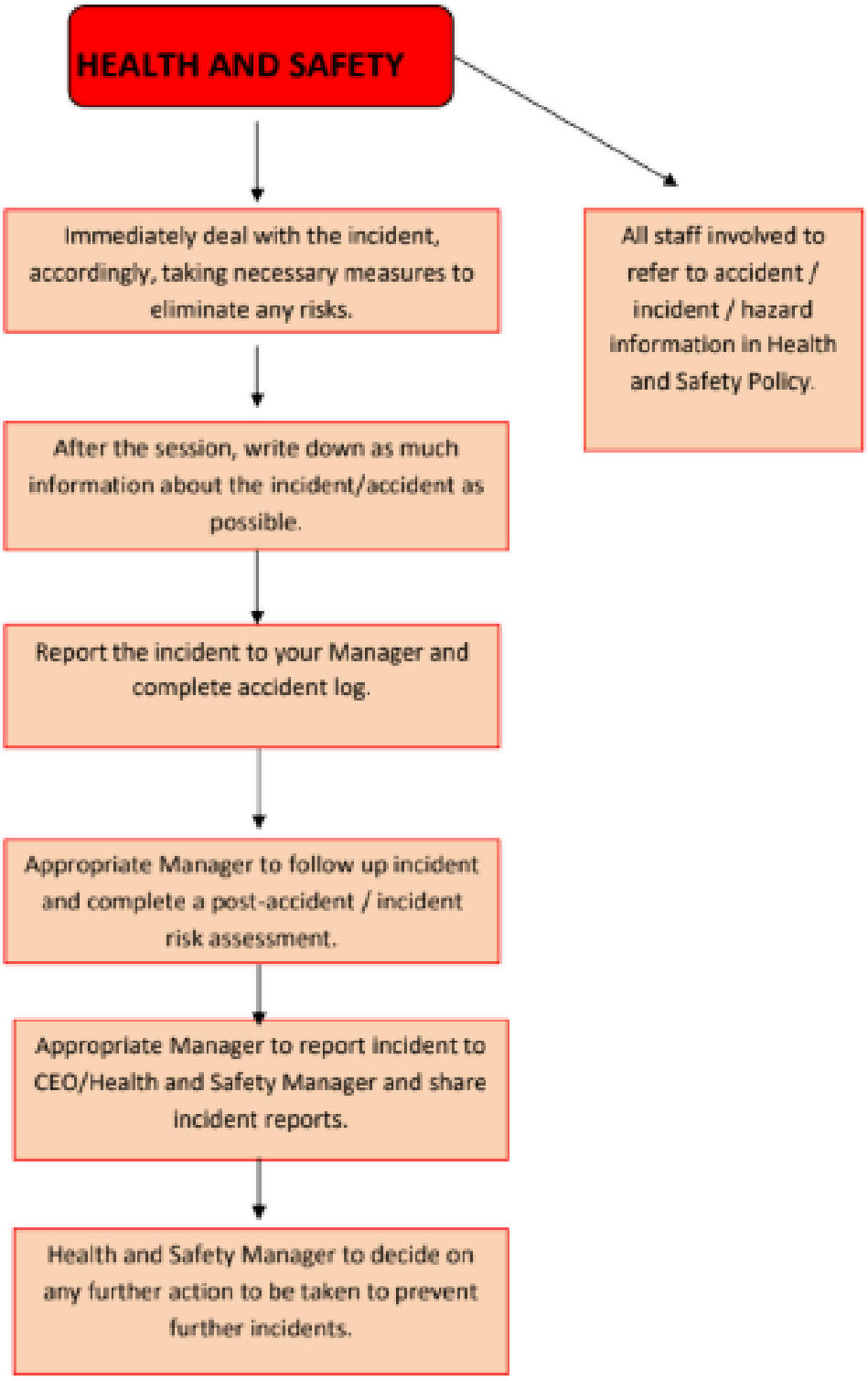
SSM or DSO or Senior Member of staff - Further Action.
During the investigation and any resulting disciplinary action, it should be established if the member of staff has any other employment, working with children or young people. Details of other employment should be noted and subsequently passed on to the LADO following the conclusion of any formal disciplinary action. If the member of staff is known to work with the Company partners, then a confidential discussion should take place with the DSO of that establishment. Further meetings may be required, and these will be convened by the LADO, with your input at all times.

Further information on the Allegations Management Process can be found in “Working Together to Safeguard Children” 2026.

Appendix 7 - First Aid Reporting Flow Chart



Appendix 8 - Accident Reporting Flow Chart



Appendix 9 - Staff Personal Media Guidance and Procedures

DO:

- Gain written parent / carer permission before giving access to U18.
- Explain to the parent/carer/player the method of communication to be used and the reasons.
- Always use group texts or emails and always copy parents/carers and the designated member of the Safeguarding team into all communications with children and young people.
- Make sure texts, emails are only in relation to specific Company related activities.
- Report to SSM/DSO any inappropriate communication from a child and young person.

DO NOT:

- Use your personal phone to text a child or young person connected with the Company.
- Become friends with, follow, “like” or add to your personal social media network any child or young person. This includes becoming friends with U18 through professional social media accounts that may be managed by parents.
- Use internet or web-based communications to send personal messages of any nature to a child or young person.
- Use language that is directly or could be misinterpreted as being racist, sexist, derogatory, threatening, abusive or sexualised in tone.
- Use the Company username for personal use.

Any of the above could lead to abuse of a position of trust and breach the standards of professional behaviour and conduct expected by the Company and could be the subject of disciplinary procedures.

The Company will:

- Ensure all privacy settings are locked so that the pages are used explicitly for Company matters and not as a place to meet or have private conversations.
- Monitor social networking pages regularly and where appropriate, raise any concerns or disciplinary matters.
- Please refer to the Company Email and Internet policy.
- Remember your Induction training and the Company Safeguarding code of conduct.

Appendix 10 - Player Personal Media Guidance and Procedures

Within the Company.

We want you to use social networks and the internet safely to get or receive information. The guidance below is to keep everyone safe and to ensure we respect each other.

The Company will:

- Monitor social networking pages regularly and where appropriate, raise any concerns or disciplinary matters.
- Gain written parent/carer permission before giving access to U18.
- Explain to the parent/carer/player the method of communication to be used between parents, players and staff and the reasons.
- Always use group texts or emails and always copy parents/carers and the designated member of the Safeguarding team into all communications with children and young people.
- Make sure texts, emails are only in relation to specific Company related activities.

Guidance for Players

- Know who from the Company should be contacting you and which site they will use to do so.
- Do not post, text or email things that are hurtful, insulting, offensive, abusive, threatening or discriminatory (e.g., racist, sexist or homophobic). This could be against the rules of football or even criminal and may lead to disciplinary action.
- Do not give out personal details including mobile phone numbers, email addresses or social media account access (such as accepting friend or follow requests) to people you do not know.
- Use all guidance from social networking sites to keep yourself safe.
- No matter how well you get on with coaches, managers, or staff do not invite them to become your friends online. They have been asked not to accept such invitations.
- Tell an adult you trust or SSM/DSO if you are asked to become the friend of an adult involved in the Company or within football.
- Tell an adult you trust about any communications that make you feel uncomfortable or that asks you not to tell your parent/carer or speak to the DSO or Senior Safeguarding Manager (Melissa Dray).

Appendix 11a - Procedures for Youth Produced Sexual Imagery Nudes/Semi-Nudes (Staff)

Definitions:

"Youth produced" means children sharing images they/peers created. Includes nudes, semi-nudes, and AI deepfake content under KCSIE 2026.

"Imagery" means both still and moving videos.

Description:

- A person under the age of 18 creates and shares sexual imagery of themselves with a peer under the age of 18.
- A person under the age of 18 shares sexual imagery created by another person with a peer under the age of 18 or an adult.
- A person under the age of 18 is in possession of sexual imagery created by another person under the age of 18.

Legislation:

The Protection of Children Act 1978 as amended in the Sexual Offences Act 2003 states that it is illegal to make, possess, distribute any imagery of someone under 18 which is "indecent". This includes imagery of yourself if you are under 18. Note that the sharing of sexual imagery of people under 18 by adults constitutes sexual abuse and will lead to an immediate police referral.

What should you do?

You should NOT view the imagery.

Refer the incident to the SSM or Company DSO as soon as possible and within 24 hrs.

What will happen next?

- The SSM/DSO will hold an initial review meeting with appropriate staff.
- Subsequently there will be interviews with those involved (if appropriate).
- Parents will be involved as soon as possible (unless there is a definite reason not to).
- If at any stage it becomes apparent that a child or young person has been harmed or at risk of harm or that a criminal offence may have been committed the SSM will make a referral to the Police or Social care. This would include where an adult is involved, violent acts, or the child or young person is being black mailed or groomed.

At all times the victim's well-being will be of paramount importance.

Appendix 11b - Procedures for Youth produced sexual imagery & Nudes/Semi-Nudes (Players)

Legislation:

The Protection of Children Act 1978 as amended in the Sexual Offences Act 2003 states that it is illegal to make, possess, distribute any imagery of someone under 18 which is “indecent”. This includes imagery of yourself if you are under 18.

You must not:

- You must not create, share, or possess nude, semi-nude, or AI-generated sexual images.
- Share sexual images, photos or videos with any other person whether they are under the age of 18 or not.
- Be in possession of sexual images, photos or videos, created by another person under the age of 18.
- Be in possession of any sexual image photos or videos sent to you by an adult.

If any of the above should happen, please speak immediately to a person you trust, or DSO. You should not show the imagery to anyone else.

What will happen next?

- The person you have spoken to will tell the Senior Safeguarding Manager (SSM).
- If appropriate the SSM will speak with you.
- Parents will be involved as soon as possible (unless there is a definite reason not to).

If at any stage, it becomes apparent that you or another child or young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm the SSM will make a referral to the Police or Social care. This would include where an adult is involved, violent acts, or the child or young person is being black-mailed or groomed.

Remember we are there to help and support you.

If you feel unable to talk to anyone at the Company, you can get help by contacting the NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000.

Appendix 12 - Match Days

On match days the stadium is in the control of the Head of Safety and Security or his/ her nominated deputy. Anyone who has a concern for the safety and well-being of a child or young person should immediately contact the control room. The Head of Safety and Security will then alert the Senior Safeguarding Manager (SSM) Melissa Dray who will attend the incident and advise on any appropriate action including police liaison.

Stewards with appropriate training will be allocated to members of the public who are considered “vulnerable” many of whom are situated in the disabled bays. Specific stewards with DBS checks will be responsible for supporting the SSM and will be advised to do so by the Head of Safety and Security.

Ejections

In the case of a supporter being U18 the control room must be informed immediately. No person U18 should be ejected from the ground until the SSM has attended, and a responsible adult has been contacted.

Searching

The Company has a clear searching policy which sets out the correct protocols for searching children and vulnerable adults. All stewards are aware of the policy and receive additional training.

Lost Child

This should be reported immediately to Head of Safety and Security who will alert the SSM. Under no circumstances should an adult be alone with a child. They need to situate themselves in sight of the control room and other people.

The Company has a comprehensive Match Day Policy which should be read in conjunction with Safeguarding Children Policy and Safeguarding Adult Policy.

Head of Safety and Security Ashton Gate Stadium

Jennifer Reay –
Jennifer.Reay@ashtongate.co.uk

Women’s Safety Officer

Paul O'Keeffe - Paul.OKeeffe@ashtongate.co.uk

Appendix 13 - Procedures and Safety Measures for Online Learning & AI Safety

BCWFC expects all staff, volunteers and players to adhere to the relevant policy boundaries which must be always maintained. We have put extra measures in place to reduce the risks in relation to online learning which include:

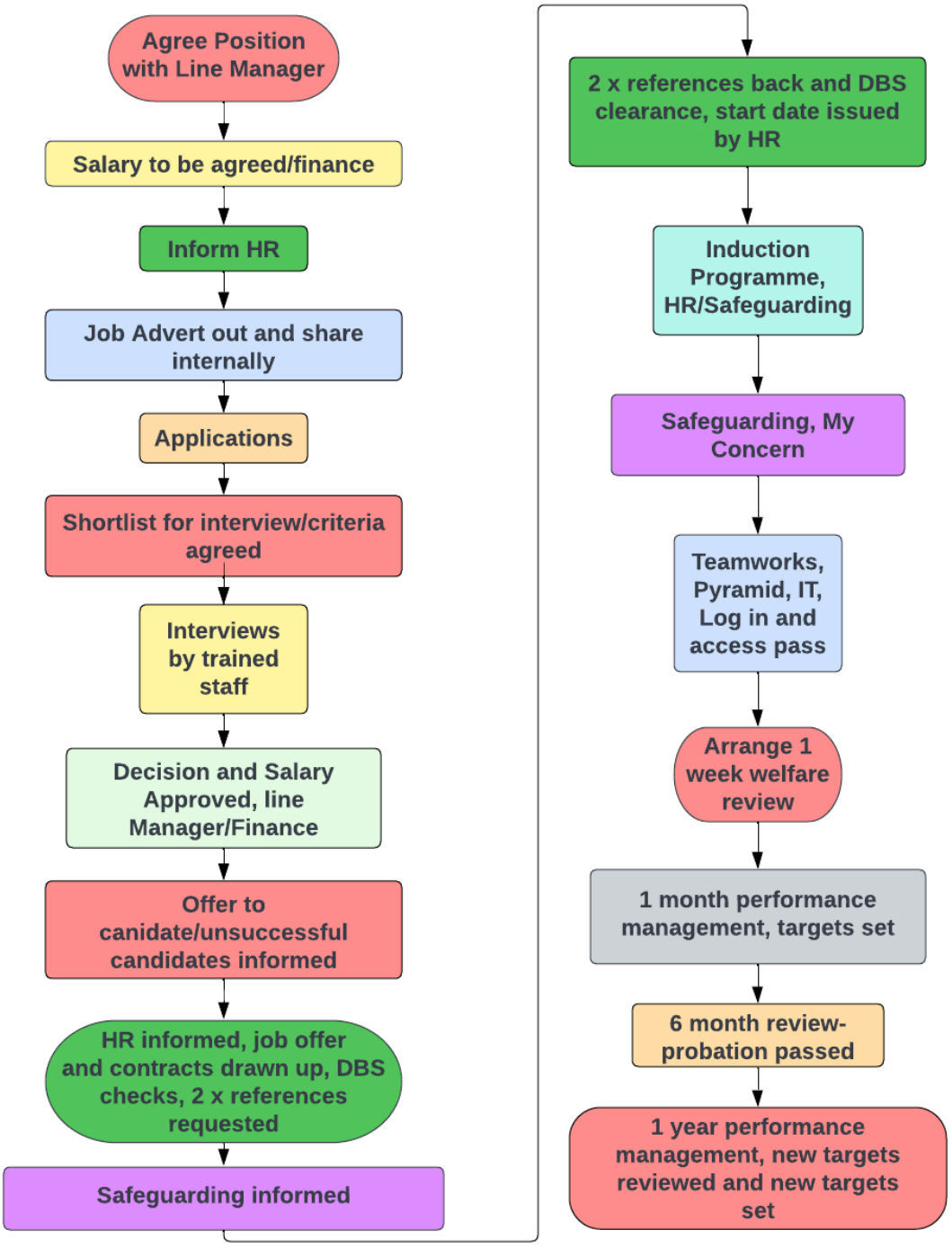
- All online platforms and AI tools must comply with annual Filtering and Monitoring checks.
- Mobile phones are restricted by default during instruction.
- All contact online being observable and interruptible.
- Staff and children must wear suitable clothing as should anyone else in the household.
- Any computers being used should be in appropriate areas, for example not in bedrooms and the background should not be blurred.
- Online teaching will not be carried out on a one-to-one basis and will be done in a group setting with several players present.
- Another adult will be invited to be present in the room.
- All communication provided will have an educational purpose.
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including from any family members in the background.
- The Company will record online teaching/instruction sessions. Players and parents will be informed that sessions are being recorded in advance of doing so.
- All sessions provided will be via the Company IT platform (for example remote desktop) or Wi-Fi (where possible)

Online safety

It is important that internet safety and security messages are reinforced. It is important that both players and parents are aware of the help and support available should they be concerned about something they have seen or experienced online. These include:

UK Safer Internet Centre	https://reportharmfulcontent.com/
CEOP	https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/
Internet Matters	https://www.internetmatters.org/
NetAware	https://www.net-aware.org.uk/
ParentInfo	https://parentinfo.org/
ThinkuKnow	https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/

Appendix 14 - Safer Recruitment Flow Chart



References

Acts and Legislation

- The Children's Act 1989
- The Children's Act 2004
- Data Protection Act 2018
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- Teacher's Standards 2021:
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child:
- NSPCC Guidance for England
- DBS Code of Practice

Internal Policies

- Privacy Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- "Raising a Concern" Policy
- Criminal Records Policy
- Disciplinary Policy:
- Social Media PolicyCode of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers: First Aid Procedures: Guidelines for action plans in the event of an emergency (noted as Appendices 6 and 7).

Additional reference materials:

- Allegations against people who work with children.
- Single Assessment Framework.
- Threshold Guidance.

Document Review Information

Document title	Safeguarding Children's Policy	**Status**	Approved
Owner	SSM	**Version**	v3.0
Date	Sept 2026	**Review date**	Sept 2027
Approved by	Hannah Buckley	**Applies to**	BCWFC