

Safeguarding Policy (Children and Young People)

Valid from: 1 December 2024

To be reviewed : 1 December 2025

This policy should be reviewed annually or when required due to a change within the HPA or in conjunction with relevant legislation. This policy applies to everyone within the HPA and should be read in conjunction with all other relevant Safeguarding documents including the Safeguarding Policy for Adults at Risk.

Contents

1. Policy Statement
2. Introduction
3. Definitions
4. Statutory Framework
5. Role of the HPA
6. Child Abuse
7. Good and Poor Practice
8. Children with additional vulnerabilities
9. Position of Trust and Abuse of trust in the Equestrian Industry
10. Duty of Care
11. Dealing with a Disclosure
12. Guidance for sharing information
13. Informing parents/carers

Appendix 1 – Types of abuse

Appendix 2 – Grooming overview

Appendix 3 – Support for victims and families

1. Policy Statement

The Hurlingham Polo Association (the “HPA” or “Association”) places the highest priority on the safety and enjoyment of children and young people participating in equestrian sport and is committed to promoting the highest possible standard of care across the Association. It therefore aims to ensure that all children and young people, regardless of age, ability or disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, socio-economic background have a positive and enjoyable experience of our sport in a safe and child centred environment.

To meet its objective the HPA commits to:

- Ensuring children and young people are protected from harm, abuse and degrading treatment whilst participating in equestrian sports and associated activities;
- Helping everyone to adopt best practice to safeguard children and young people from abuse;
- Taking all steps to ensure that the protection of children and young people is the primary consideration and may override the rights and needs of those adults working with them;
- Developing an Association culture of listening to children and taking account of their rights, wishes and feelings;
- Ensuring all allegations, suspicions of harm and concerns will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly, fairly and appropriately; and
- Working in partnership to promote the welfare, health and development of children and young people.

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018 - updated 1 July 2022) document published by the Department of Education states that:

- *A child centred approach is fundamental to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child. A child centred approach means keeping the child in focus when making decisions about their lives and working in partnership with them and their families.*
- *Everyone who works with children has a responsibility for keeping them safe. No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances and, if children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action and;*
- *In order that organisations, agencies and practitioners collaborate effectively, it is vital that everyone working with children and families, including those who work with parents/carers, understands the role they should play and the role of other practitioners.*

The HPA's Safeguarding Policy aims to help all those involved in our sport understand what they need to do, and what they can expect of one another, to safeguard children. It focuses on core legal

requirements and makes clear what individuals and organisations should do to keep children and young people safe.

The Stewards of the HPA endorse and are responsible for ensuring that this Safeguarding Policy is implemented and will deal with any actual or potential breaches. The HPA CEO has the overall responsibility for the implementation of the Policy, supported by the HPA Safeguarding team. However, to achieve its overall aims, every member of the organisation, and its key partners and stakeholders, must be aware of the policy and ensure its widespread implementation.

This policy and all associated safeguarding policies and procedures apply to all volunteers, employees, athletes, spectators and anyone else involved with the Association.

All those involved in equestrian sport have a duty of care to safeguard the welfare of children and young people. This Policy and the procedures set out in it will be widely promoted and are mandatory for everyone involved in the HPA. Failure to comply with this Policy will be addressed without delay with the disciplinary committee and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.

2. Introduction

The HPA places the highest priority on safety and enjoyment and recognises that it has a duty of care towards children and young people within the horse industry. Any organisation, establishment or individual providing riding or horse management opportunities must do so with the highest possible standard of care.

To ensure this, the HPA is committed to devising and implementing policies and procedures to ensure that all those involved, accept their responsibilities to safeguard children from harm and abuse.

The HPA fully accepts its legal and moral obligation to children and young people and its duty of care to protect children and young people and to safeguard their welfare. As part of our safeguarding policy the HPA 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 HPA acknowledges that some children and young people, 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.

3. Definitions Used in this Policy

A child is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. We therefore use the term “Children” in this policy to include ‘children and young people not yet 18’ throughout.

The terms “safeguarding” and “child protection” are often used in conjunction. We use the term “Safeguarding” in this policy to include child protection, based on the following definitions.

Working Together to Safeguard Children defines Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as:

- *protecting children from maltreatment*
- *preventing impairment of children’s health or development*
- *ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care*
- *taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes*

The NSPCC defines Safeguarding and Child Protection as the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

“Child protection is part of the safeguarding process. It focuses on protecting individual children identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. This includes child protection procedures which detail how to respond to concerns about a child” (NSPCC, 2018).

4. Statutory Framework

In order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, the HPA will act in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

England & Wales

- Children Acts 1989 & 2004
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) 1989
- The European Convention on Human Rights 1950
- Police Act 1997
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, 2018)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

- Sexual Offences (Amendments) Act 2003
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Care Act 2014 - implemented March 2015
- Information Sharing Advice - HM Government 2018
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused. - March 2015
- Procedures set out by the local Safeguarding Children Boards
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022

Scotland

- Children (Scotland) Act 1995
- Protection from Abuse (Scotland) Act 2001
- Protection of Children and Prevention of Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2005
- Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007
- Children and Young People (Scotland) 2014
- National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (Scottish Government, 2021)

Northern Ireland

- The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995
- Safeguarding Board Act (Northern Ireland) 2001
- Article 17 and 18 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 2003
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007
- Criminal Law Act (Northern Ireland) 1967
- Safeguarding and child protection in schools – a guide for schools (Department of Education, 2020)
- How to identify and manage harmful sexual behaviour displayed by children and young people (Department of Education (DE), 2022)

5. Role of the HPA and its Clubs

The HPA has formally adopted this policy and all associated policies, procedures and guidance.

In pursuit of this, the HPA working in partnership with its Clubs is committed to ensuring that:

- The welfare of all children and young people is paramount, and children and young people have the right to protection from abuse.
- It takes all reasonable, practical steps to protect children and young people from harm, discrimination and degrading treatment and to respect their rights, wishes and feelings.

- All concerns and allegations of poor practice or abuse are taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- High standards of behaviour and practice are maintained through compliance with the HPA codes of conduct produced for all those involved in our sport.
- Everyone knows and accepts their responsibilities and works together: riders, parents/carers or relevant family members, coaches, proprietors, volunteers, and professional staff.

The role of the HPA is to:

- Provide a strategic overview and guidance on safeguarding children and young people and promote their welfare.
- Provide guidance on best practice in recruitment, training and supervision of staff, members and volunteers, parents and carers.
- Respond to and support clubs with the management of allegations, concerns and complaints relating to children and young people, initiating Case Management systems and processes as necessary, liaising with the Case Management Group as requested clubs.
- Give guidance on the implementation and management of appropriate disciplinary and appeals procedures in relation to children and young people, including monitoring the outcomes of any such events as requested by clubs.
- Ensure that all incidents are correctly reported and referred out in accordance with the HPA guidelines.
- Ensure that HPA procedures for recruitment of staff and volunteers, within the HPA, are followed and all appropriate existing staff or volunteers have up to date criminal record checks if appropriate.
- Review and monitor the implementation of the policy and procedures on an annual basis.
- Ensure that all data collected by the HPA is kept securely in accordance with data protection legislation.

Commented [K11]: Do we do this or if not should we?

The HPA Case Management Group (CMG) role is to:

- Provide support, advice and consultation;
- Provide Case Management Support;
- Give guidance on best practice

The HPA Lead Safeguarding Officer

The specific role of the HPA Lead Safeguarding Officer is to:

- Lead and coordinate safeguarding across the Association.
- Manage and coordinate all safeguarding concerns
- Develop and maintain Association wide safeguarding policies and procedures
- Coordinate with clubs and outside agencies where necessary
- Monitor and feed back to the Stewards.

Safeguarding Officer Contact details:

Telephone Numbers: 01367 246803 or 07825 509636

Email: safeguarding@hpa-polo.co.uk

Commented [K12]: Did we create this email address? I think we did and it comes to you but just checking before we put it out there!

The role of each club's Safeguarding Officer is:

- To adopt and promote the HPA policies and procedures.
- To promote education and training to support staff, members and volunteers.
- To manage and monitor the implementation of the policy and procedures.
- To be the first point of contact for staff and volunteers, young people and parents for any issue concerning children and young people welfare, poor practice or potential/alleged abuse.
- To record and report monitoring information as required.
- To respond to any allegations or complaints by reporting to the club's Lead Safeguarding Officer.
- To maintain local contact details for Children's Social Services, the Police and HPA Lead Safeguarding Officer.
- To ensure confidentiality is maintained and information is only shared on a "need to know" basis.
- To respond to any allegations or complaints made from within the club. Operationally, to deal with the complaint/allegation to conclusion in line with agreed protocols.

6. Child Abuse

The NSPCC states that child abuse happens when a person – adult or child – harms a child. It can be physical, sexual or emotional, but can also involve a lack of love, care and attention (NSPCC, 2017).

There are four main categories of child abuse:

Physical abuse - happens when a child is deliberately hurt, causing injuries such as cuts, bruises, burns and broken bones. It can involve hitting, kicking, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or suffocating.

Neglect - is persistently failing to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs usually resulting in serious damage to their health and development.

Sexual abuse - is forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. It doesn't necessarily involve violence and the child may not be aware that what is happening is abuse. Child sexual abuse can involve contact abuse and/or non-contact abuse. Contact abuse happens when the abuser makes physical contact with the child.

Emotional Abuse - is persistent and, over time, it severely damages a child's emotional health and development and can take the form of constantly putting a child down, shouting at a child and calling them names and persistently ignoring a child. Examples of emotional abuse in sport include subjecting children to constant criticism, name calling, and sarcasm or bullying. It could also include their regular exclusion from an activity, such as unjustified non-selection for a team or more subtle actions such as staring at or ignoring a child. Putting children under consistent pressure to perform to unrealistically high standards is also a form of emotional abuse.

For more information on the categories of child abuse, see Appendix 1.

7. Good and Poor practice

The HPA is committed to ensuring that all those involved in equestrian sport are safe from harm and abuse and therefore it is important for those all those working or volunteering in our sport to adopt the following guidelines of good practice:

- Always work in an open environment, ensuring that, where possible, interactions take place in view of others and with consent of those involved.
- Treat all children and young people fairly and with dignity and respect irrelevant of gender, ability, race, ethnicity or sex.

- Ensure that the child's or young person's welfare is always of paramount concern and should always be considered above winning and competition.
- Recognise the needs of each individual child or young person to avoid excessive training or undue pressure.
- Encourage children and young people to take responsibility for their own sporting development and support them with any decision they make.
- Build and maintain friendly, balanced and appropriate relationships with children and young people; including parents/carers where possible
- Always challenge poor behaviour, bullying, harassment, foul or inappropriate language or any other behaviour that could upset individuals.

Poor Practice

The following are examples of poor practice and should be avoided:

- Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games or behaviour
- Showing any form of favouritism
- Shouting, making negative comments or any other form of bullying towards athletes
- Using harassing, discriminatory or provocative language
- Engaging in inappropriate relationships with athletes under 18 years of age
- Spending unnecessary time alone with an athlete in a 1:1 situation
- Transporting athletes to events or training
- Having unnecessary physical contact with athletes
- Failing to adhere to organisational policies and procedures.

This list is not exhaustive and there are many other examples of poor practice.

8. Children with additional vulnerabilities

Deaf and Disabled children may be more vulnerable and at greater risk of all forms of abuse. The presence of multiple disabilities increases the risk of both abuse and neglect. Some of the common factors that can lead to increased vulnerability include:

- **Communication Barriers** – children with speech and communication needs may face additional barriers when attempting to share their concerns. Adults may lack the knowledge and understanding to communicate with children and quite often the parent or carer may be the sole source of communication between the organisation and the child.
- **Increased isolation** – deaf and disabled children may have less contact with other people outside of their family meaning that they may have fewer people to provide support. Deaf and disabled children may also have limited access to support systems which can make it difficult for parents/carers and their children.
- **Dependency** – children with disabilities may rely on parents/carers and it can be difficult to disclosure abuse if their abuser is someone close to them.

- **Misunderstanding the signs of abuse** – signs and indicators of abuse can be misinterpreted by others due to the nature of a child's disability.
- **Lack of education** – deaf and disabled children are not always able to successfully access education around keeping safe; this may result in those children not understanding or being aware of abusive situations.

Children with disabilities have the same rights to protection as any other child and it is important for all those working in the equestrian industry to ensure that they are aware of the individual needs and additional vulnerabilities of the children they work with.

Many children and young people who come from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities experience racism, bias, stereotyping or cultural misunderstanding as they grow up. It might happen at an individual, institutional, or societal level and might be displayed consciously or unconsciously.

Research indicates that children from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups are less likely to come to the attention of authorities, face additional barriers to accessing statutory services and receive a poorer quality of support. ([Children's Commissioner, 2015](#)). In addition, children from certain communities are perceived as being more adult like (known as adultification). They are seen through a lens of deviancy and not necessarily acknowledged as deserving victims, and their innocence and vulnerability is erased over time.

We recognise that we may encounter 'unconscious bias', which refers to a bias that we are unaware of, and which happens outside of our control. It is a bias that happens automatically and is triggered by our brain making quick judgments and assessments of people and situations, influenced by our background, cultural environment and personal experiences. (Equality Challenge Unit: Unconscious bias and Higher Education, 2013). We should ensure that conscious efforts are made and actions taken to provide an equitable safeguarding response for all people on an individual and systemic level.

To make sure children from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities get the help and support they need, the adults working or volunteering with them and their families need to:

- understand the challenges they face
- build trusting relationships
- take appropriate action to help keep children safe
- use a strength-based approach to empower parents and carers from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities to take steps to keep their children safe.

9. Position of Trust and Abuse of trust in the Equestrian Industry

Position of Trust

Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 an adult is in a position of trust over a child if they regularly teach, train, supervise or have sole charge of the child in certain settings (e.g. hospitals, residential care, schools) or when in certain roles (e.g. teacher, care worker). This rule has been extended via the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 to apply to those who train, supervise or instruct young people in the fields of sport and religion.

Abuse of Trust

Sexual activity between an adult in a position of trust and a child is deemed to be an abuse of trust and is unlawful, even if the child is over the age of consent (i.e. the child is 16). Sports coaches are now recognised in law as being in “positions of trust” and so banned from engaging in sexual activity with under 18s in their care. Coaches and other officials should ensure they maintain healthy, positive and professional relationships with all participants.

10. Duty of Care

All sport organisations need to take all reasonable measures to ensure the safety and welfare of all children and young people involved in the sport. Duty of Care is considered in two ways:

The Legal Duty of Care

This refers to Health and Safety procedures where clear guidance and procedures are in place to ensure that steps are taken to minimise any dangers or hazards.

The Moral Duty of Care

This can more correctly be described as the sporting organisation’s responsibility for the safety and welfare of all children and young people involved.

11. Dealing with a Disclosure

All those involved in equestrian sport must recognise their own responsibility to safeguard children and young people and the importance of taking action where a concern about a child or young person has been raised.

It is not the responsibility of anyone working with the HPA or clubs to make a judgement on whether or not child abuse has taken place; however, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns that are raised.

Those working in the equine industry may find themselves in a position where a child makes a disclosure of harm or abuse and if this happens it is important that the appropriate action is taken. All Clubs and those involved with them are expected to adhere to the following procedures if a child discloses that they have been abused in some way

Deleted: Member Bodies

Dealing with a disclosure

- When information about possible abuse comes to light, find time and a suitable place to listen to the child.
- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock, disbelief or attempting to lead the child.
- Do not make false promises and do not promise confidentiality. If the child asks that information is kept secret, it is important that you tell the child in a manner appropriate to the child's age that you cannot promise complete confidentiality—instead you must explain that you may need to pass information on to other professionals to help keep the child, or other children, safe.
- Allow the child to talk freely. Do not cross examine, interview, probe or ask to see any injury that is not visible. Listen, only asking non-leading questions when necessary to clarify.
- Do not criticise the alleged perpetrator.
- Reassure the child that what has happened is not his/her fault.
- Stress that it was the right thing to tell someone.
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told.
- Find out just enough to be sure of the need to refer, and keep any questions open (e.g. requiring information) rather than closed (e.g. only requiring a yes or no answer).
- Make records that are factual, accurate and relevant and avoid subjective judgements. It is not your responsibility to 'check out' what any child tells you nor should any abuser be questioned.
- Print, sign and date the record of disclosure and include your designation.

It is important that each Clubs reporting procedures are followed when reporting safeguarding concerns.

Deleted: Member Bodies

When recording a disclosure, it is important that the information is clear, concise and a true representation of the concerns. In some incidents, it may be necessary to share information with Children's Social Care or the police, hence the necessity for making detailed records at the time of the disclosure. Information should be factual and should include the following:

- The facts about the allegation or observation.
- A description of any visible injuries or signs.
- The child's account, if this has been disclosed, of what has happened and how any injuries occurred.
- Any witnesses to the incident(s).
- Any times, dates or other relevant information
- A clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.

- A record of any non-verbal behaviours
- Action taken as a result of the concern
- The name, address and date of birth of those involved.

Please note: Where possible you should include the relevant dates, times, situation, people present and factual information, including the dates, times and designation of the report writer. The record must then be signed with the name and designation clearly printed beneath.

12. Guidance for sharing information

Guidance from the Government, [Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners](#), describes key principles for deciding what to share, the 'seven golden rules for information sharing':

1. **Remember that the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and human rights law are not barriers** to justified information sharing, but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.
2. **Be open and honest with the individual** (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
3. **Seek advice from other practitioners** if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.
4. **Share with informed consent where appropriate** and, where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to having their information shared. You may still share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is lawful basis to do so, such as where safety may be at risk.
5. **Consider safety and well-being:** Base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.
6. **Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure:** Ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely.
7. **Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it** – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

The HPA will share information to achieve their objective of ensuring that children, young adults and adults at risk are effectively safeguarded across the Federation. The sharing of data will take place in accordance with Data Protection law and guidance and where it is necessary to do so in order to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children.

13. Informing parents/carers

Wherever possible, personnel concerned about the welfare of a child should work in partnership with parents/carers. Therefore, in most situations, it would be important to talk to parents/carers to help clarify any initial concerns (e.g. if a child's behaviour has changed, it is important to check whether there is a reasonable explanation such as family upset or bereavement).

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

Appendix 1 - Types of Abuse

"Child abuse is any action by another person – adult or child – that causes significant harm to a child. It can be physical, sexual or emotional, but can just as often be about a lack of love, care and attention. We know that neglect, whatever form it takes, can be just as damaging to a child as physical abuse.

An abused child will often experience more than one type of abuse, as well as other difficulties in their lives. It often happens over a period of time, rather than being a one-off event. And it can increasingly happen online." (NSPCC, online, 2016).

There are four main categories of abuse:

Physical Abuse: A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Example of Physical Abuse in Sport

It is normal for children to have cuts and bruises on their bodies caused by accidents which happen whilst they are moving about and/or playing. These are marks that have an acceptable and reasonable explanation. Marks or injuries which do not have an acceptable explanation may indicate that a child has been abused.

Bodily Harm that may be caused by:

- Over training or dangerous training of athletes.
- Over playing an athlete.
- Failure to do a risk assessment of physical limits or pre-existing medical conditions.
- Administering, condoning or failure to intervene in drug use.

Other signs of physical abuse include multiple injuries (i.e. bruising, fractures) inflicted at different times. It is particularly concerning if parents/carers are unable to explain these injuries and it is not clear whether they took the child to receive medical treatment at the time of the injury.

Signs which **may** raise concerns about physical abuse include:

- Refusal to discuss injuries
- Aggression towards others
- Improbable excuse given to explain injuries
- Fear of parents being approached for an explanation
- Running away
- Untreated injuries
- Excessive physical punishment
- Unexplained injuries, particularly if recurrent
- Avoiding activities due to injuries or possibility of injuries being discovered

- Wearing long or extra clothing to hide injuries

Sexual Abuse: Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non – penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non – contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Example of Sexual Abuse in Sport

- Exposure to sexually explicit inappropriate language or jokes.
- Showing a child pornographic material or using a child to produce such material.
- Sexual intercourse and/or sexual activity with a child under 18.

Signs which **may** raise concerns about sexual abuse include:

- | | |
|---|---|
| • Lack of trust in adults or over familiarity with adults, fear of a particular adult | • Social isolation – being withdrawn or introverted, poor peer relationship |
| • Sleep disturbance (nightmares or bed-wetting) | • Running away from home |
| • Girls taking over the mothering role | • School problems e.g. falling standards, truancy |
| • Reluctance or refusal to participate in physical activity or to change clothes | • Low self-esteem |
| • Drug, alcohol or solvent abuse | • Display of sexual knowledge beyond the child's age |
| • Sexual promiscuity, over-sexualised behaviour, compulsive masturbation | • Eating disorders |
| • Unusual interest in the genitals of adults, children or animals | • Anxiety, depression, self-harm/mutilations, suicide attempts |
| • Bruises, scratches, bite marks to the thighs or genital areas | • Pregnancy |
| • Discomfort/difficulty in walking or sitting | • Fear of medical examinations |
| • Urinary tract problems, vaginal infection or genital damage | • Genital odour, venereal/sexually transmitted disease |
| • Stained underwear, soiling or wetting | • Itchiness, soreness, discharge, unexplained bleeding from the rectum, vagina or penis |
| • Fear of bathrooms, showers, closed doors | • Abnormal sexual drawings |
| • Having irrational fears | • Developmental regression/acting younger than their age |
| • Psychosomatic factors e.g. recurrent | • "Grooming" including over the internet |
| | • Wearing extra clothing/clothing tied tight; reluctance to wear sports kit |

Emotional Abuse: The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued insofar as they meet the needs of another

person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or “making fun” of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child’s developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

It is important to remember that some children are naturally open and affectionate whilst others are quieter and more self-contained. Children also develop at different rates from one another and some may be slightly more or less advanced than other children in their age group. Mood swings and challenging behaviour are also a normal part of growing up for teenagers and children going through puberty. Be alert to behaviours which appear to be out of character for the individual child.

Examples of Emotional Abuse in Sport

- Persistent failure to show any respect to a child e.g. continually ignoring a child.
- Constantly humiliating a child by telling them they are useless; subjecting children to constant criticism, name calling, and sarcasm or bullying
- Regular exclusion from an activity, such as unjustified non-selection for a team Continually being aggressive towards a child making them feel frightened.
- Acting in a way which is detrimental to the child’s self-esteem.
- Putting children under consistent pressure to perform to unrealistically high standards is also a form of emotional abuse

Signs which **may** raise concerns about emotional abuse include:

- Low self-esteem
- Significant decline in concentration
- Running away
- Indiscriminate friendliness and neediness
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Self-harm or mutilation

Neglect: The persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and / or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care – givers); or
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

Example of Neglect in Sport

- Persistent failure to show any respect to a child e.g. continually ignoring a child.
- Constantly humiliating a child by telling them they are useless.
- Continually being aggressive towards a child making them feel frightened.
- Exposing a child to extreme weather conditions e.g. heat and cold.
- Failing to seek medical attention for injuries.
- Exposing a child to risk of injury through the use of unsafe equipment.
- Exposing a child to a hazardous environment without a proper risk assessment of the activity.
- Failing to provide adequate nutrition and water.

Signs which **may** raise concerns about neglect include:

- Constant hunger
- Constant tiredness
- Untreated medical problems
- poor peer relationships
- Poor personal hygiene and/or poor state of clothing
- Frequent lateness or unexplained non- attendance
- Low self-esteem
- Stealing

Please note that this is not an exhaustive list and the presence of one or more of the indicators is not proof that abuse is actually taking place. Any concerns that you have about children should be investigated appropriately.

Appendix 2 – Grooming Overview

Understanding the grooming or entrapment process

Most sport activities offer excellent opportunities for young people to train, try new things, make friends and improve their skills. They are often the places where appropriate trusting relationships are developed. Such relationships of trust should be used appropriately to advise young people and demonstrate the positive values of sport. However, sport activities can also provide opportunities for adults to target and groom a child or young person through their role as a volunteer or paid employee.

Grooming is defined by the Home Office as “Communication with a child where there is an intention to meet and commit a sex offence with that child”. More generally it can be seen as the process by which an individual manipulates all those around him/her, including, but not exclusively, the child, to provide opportunities to abuse that child and reduce the likelihood of being reported or discovered. The abuser will also attempt to manipulate the circumstances in which he/she is working to enhance the likelihood of working in an unobserved one to one situation with that person. Abusers come from all sections of society and are often perceived by others as respectable, reliable and trustworthy people. Research tells us that the vast majority of abusers are well known to the child and often hold a position of trust or authority. Recent research has found that sporting organisations are the third largest arena for incidents of sexual abuse.

The key factors which enable the coach/official to exploit a child are:

1. Sport opportunity

If the sport training facility provides situations or opportunities for the coach/authority figure that are not recognised as good practice (eg. allowing the coach/authority figure to develop an opportunity/excuse to meet the child outside the venue), this can contribute to the vulnerability or potential susceptibility of the child in that situation. He/she may feel unable to refuse the offer or be flattered by the invitation.

2. Coach/authority figure inclination

The coach/authority figure may have a desire or interest in developing a relationship beyond that of the appropriate coach/authority figure/child relationship and the good practice boundaries expected by the sport and family of that relationship.

3. Athlete vulnerability

The child by virtue of the relationship with their coach/authority figure is vulnerable. They may view any potential inappropriate coach/authority figure behaviour as acceptable in order to achieve or advance their goals within the sport. Conversely the child may be anxious that questioning or raising a concern about the coach/authority figure's behaviour may jeopardise their selection for their team or similar section.

Importance of challenging secrets

If abuse remains a secret, abusers will continue to abuse. If someone speaks about the abuse, this allows us to end the abuse, support the child and may open the door to treatment for the abuser.

The Child Protection in Sport Unit has provided a briefing; please see their website:

<https://thecpsu.org.uk/resource-library/best-practice/protecting-children-in-sport-from-grooming-and-sexual-abuse/>

Appendix 3 - Support for those involved.

Support for all involved

It is important to acknowledge that, in matters relating to any Child Protection incidents, it can be distressing for all involved. It is, therefore, important to be aware of sources of support and help that may be available in this situation.

The following organisations may be able to provide support:

Organisation	Contact Details
Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU)	Telephone Number: 0116 366 5590 Email: cpsu@nspcc.org.uk Website: www.thecpsu.org.uk
NSPCC Helpline	Telephone Number: 0808 800 5000 Email: help@nspcc.org.uk Website: www.nspcc.org.uk Online reporting: www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/report-abuse/report-abuse-online
ChildLine	Telephone Number: 0800 1111 Email: www.childline.org.uk/registration Website: www.childline.org.uk 1:2:1 chat: www.childline.org.uk/get-support/1-2-1-counsellor-chat
The Samaritans	Telephone Number: 116 123 Email: jo@samaritans.org Website: www.samaritans.org
Victim Support	Telephone Number: 0808 1689 111 Email: www.victimsupport.org.uk/help-and-support/get-help/supportline/email-supportline Website: www.victimsupport.org.uk Online support: www.victimsupport.org.uk/help-and-support/get-help/request-support
CEOP – Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre	Telephone Number: 0870 000 3344 Email: communication@nca.x.gsi.gov.uk Website: www.ceop.police.uk Online reporting: www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre
Self Help	Website: www.self-help.org.uk
Kidscape	Telephone Number: 020 7730 3300 Email: info@kidscape.org.uk Website: www.kidscape.org.uk
Family Lives	Telephone Number: 0808 800 2222 Website: www.familylives.org.uk