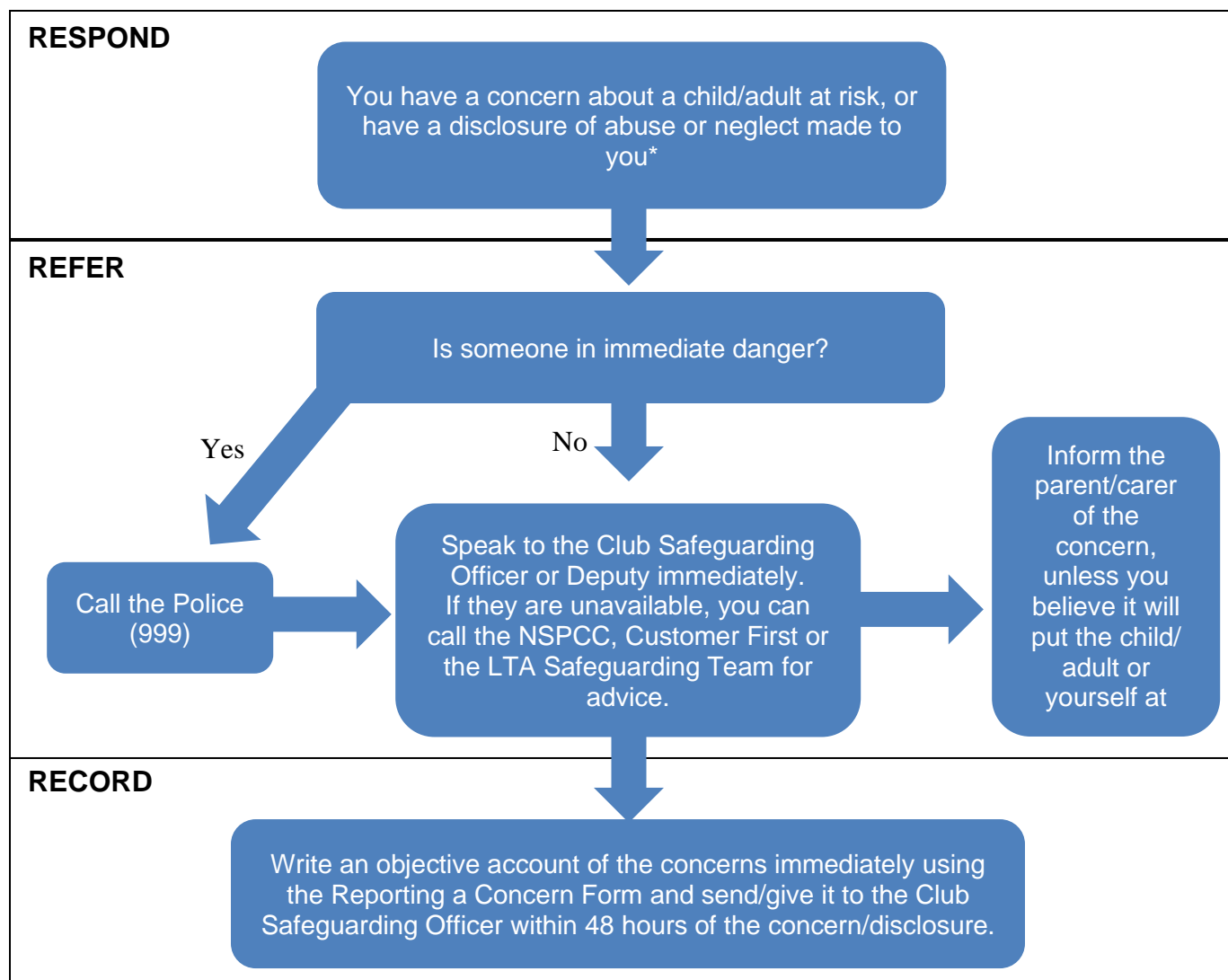


Risbygate Sports Club

Safeguarding Policy & Code of Conduct

Safeguarding Reporting Procedure

Anyone who is concerned about the well-being of a child or adult at risk, or has a disclosure of abuse or neglect made to them must:



Customer First (Suffolk Social Services)

0808 800 4005

NSPCC

0808 800 5000

LTA Safeguarding Team

0208 487 7000 / safeguarding@lta.org.uk

EIBA Safeguarding Team

01664 481900 / peterthompson@eiba.co.uk

Bowls England Safeguarding Team

01929 500490 / safeguarding@lbowlsengland.com

England Squash Safeguarding Team

0161 4384302 / safesquash@englandsquash.com

*See Appendix C for guidance on how to respond to a disclosure

If you have a concern regarding the Club Safeguarding Officer, you should contact the Deputy Safeguarding Officer or the Club Chairman. Alternatively, speak to one of the safeguarding teams listed on the left or contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) 0300 123 2044 / LADOCentral@suffolk.gcsx.gov.uk

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Safeguarding Policy

1. Policy statement

Risbygate Sports Club is committed to prioritising the well-being of all children and adults at risk, promoting safeguarding in our club at all times, including all programmes and events we run. This Policy strives to minimise risk, deliver a positive sporting experience for everyone and respond appropriately to all safeguarding concerns/disclosures.

2. Use of terminology

Child: a person under the age of eighteen years.

Adult at risk of abuse or neglect: a person aged eighteen years or over who is, or may be, in need of community care services by reason of disability, age or illness; and is, or may be, unable to take care of, or unable to protect themselves against abuse or neglect.

Safeguarding children: protecting children from abuse and neglect, preventing the impairment of children's health or development, ensuring that they grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances.

Safeguarding adults at risk: protecting adults from abuse and/or neglect. Enabling adults to maintain control over their lives and make informed choices without coercion. Empowering adults at risk, consulting them before taking action, unless someone lacks the capacity to make a decision, or their mental health poses a risk to their own or someone else's safety, in which case, always acting in his or her best interests.

(See appendix A for full glossary of terms).

3. Scope

This Policy is applicable to all staff, volunteers, committee members, coaches and Club members. It is in line with national legislation and applicable across the UK.

4. Responsibility for the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy, Code of Conduct and Reporting Procedure

SAFEGUARDING IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY: NOT RESPONDING TO A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN IS NOT AN OPTION.

- Our Club's Board has overall accountability for this Policy and its implementation.
- Our Club's Safeguarding Officer is responsible for updating this Policy at least biannually, in line with legislative and Club developments.
- All individuals involved in/present at the Club are required to adhere to the Policy and Code of Conduct.
- It is **NOT** the responsibility of those working in Risbygate Sports Club to decide whether abuse is occurring. It **IS** their responsibility to act on any concerns, however small.

Where there is a safeguarding concern/disclosure:

- The individual who is told about, hears, or is made aware of the concern/disclosure is responsible for following the Safeguarding Reporting Procedure. Unless someone is in immediate danger (in which case call 999), they should inform the Club Safeguarding Officer.
- They must make a written record of the concern, if possible, using the Reporting a Concern Form.
- The Club's Safeguarding Officer is responsible for reporting safeguarding concerns to the police, Suffolk Children's Services and/or to the Safeguarding Team of the relevant sport's governing body.

(See Appendix B for a list of telephone numbers. Appendix D gives some common signs that might indicate abuse.)

5. Breaches of the Safeguarding Policy, Code of Conduct and Reporting Procedure

Breaches of this Policy and/or failure to comply with the outlined responsibilities may result in the following:

- Disciplinary action leading to possible dismissal and legal action;
- Termination of current and future roles within the Club and roles in other clubs.

Actions taken by staff, consultants, volunteers, officials, coaches inside or outside of the Club that are seen to contradict this Policy may be considered a violation of this Policy.

6. How to raise a concern about a child or an adult at risk at the Club

If a child or an adult at risk is in immediate danger or risk of harm, the police should be contacted by calling 999.

Where a child or an adult at risk is not in immediate danger, any concerns about their wellbeing should be made without delay to the Club Safeguarding Officer. The Club Safeguarding Officer will pass the details of the concern on to the relevant sport Safeguarding Team at the earliest opportunity and the Local Authority and the police will be contacted, where appropriate.

Helen Stacy is the Club Safeguarding Officer - she can be contacted on 07500 631369. Alternatively, email the Helen on safeguarding@risbygatesportsclub.co.uk.

Information to include when raising a concern

The whistleblower should provide as much information as possible regarding the incident or circumstance which has given rise to the concern, including:

- their name and contact details (unless they wish to remain anonymous);
- names of individuals involved;
- date, time and location of incident/circumstance; and
- whether any witnesses were present.

Reporting forms are available in the clubhouse and online. The LTA also has an online reporting tool.

What happens next?

All concerns raised about the wellbeing of a child or an adult at risk will be taken seriously and every effort will be made to deal with each concern fairly, quickly and proportionately.

If it appears a concern has not been dealt with appropriately, the NSPCC Whistleblowing advice line should be contacted on 0808 800 5000 or by emailing help@nspcc.org.uk.

Support

The Club will not tolerate any harassment, victimisation or unfair treatment of, and will take appropriate action to protect a child or adult at risk when a concern is raised.

7. Whistleblowing

Safeguarding children and adults at risk requires everyone to be committed to the highest possible standards of openness, integrity and accountability. As a Club, we are committed to encouraging and maintaining a culture where people feel able to raise a genuine safeguarding concern and are confident that it will be taken seriously.

What is whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing is when someone reports wrongdoing on the basis that it is in the public interest. In the context of safeguarding, this can include:

- An organisation which does not have clear safeguarding procedures,
- Concerns that are not dealt with properly or may have been covered up,
- A concern raised that has not been acted upon, or
- Being worried about repercussions if a concern or allegation is raised.

A whistleblower may be:

- a player;
- a volunteer;
- a coach;
- other member of staff;
- an official;
- a parent;
- a member of the public.

Whistleblowers should contact the Safeguarding Officer. If they wish to speak to someone outside the Club, they should ring the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice line on 0800 0280285 or email them at help@nspcc.org.uk.

8. Safe Recruitment

All those who work regularly with children and adults at risk or have unsupervised contact with them are subject to formal enhanced checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Coaches who work with children or adults at risk will normally be required to be registered with the relevant National Governing Body. In tennis, this currently applies to Level 2 coaches and above.

When recruiting new personnel who are likely to be working with children or vulnerable adults, the following procedures will be followed:

- Identity and qualifications will be verified;
- Applicants will be asked to confidentially self-disclose any unspent criminal offences or child protection investigations. Where the information raises a safeguarding concern, details will be shared with the relevant sport's safeguarding team;

- At least two references will be required and will be followed-up;
- An enhanced DBS certificate will be obtained (via the applicant), or an overseas police check will be carried out, before the person starts work. If the outcome of a DBS check is not satisfactory, or if the DBS certificate is not provided, an offer of employment may be withdrawn

The Club Safeguarding Officer will maintain a database of DBS checks to ensure they are renewed when necessary, normally every 3 years.

The Club provides an induction for all new staff, coaches and volunteers which includes our safeguarding policies and procedures.

9. Changing Room Policy

The Club is committed to ensuring that all children and adults at risk are safeguarded from abuse. This section sets out our policy for the acceptable use of our changing rooms.

- The use of mobile phones, the taking of photos and videos, and the use of any form of recording equipment in the changing rooms is forbidden;
- As a rule, children may not enter the changing room; they should use the disabled toilet located off the function room or the petanque toilets. They may only use the changing rooms if accompanied at all times by a parent or carer;
- Under no circumstances will adult staff, coaches or volunteers change or shower at the same time as children using the changing rooms.
- Children under the age of 8 may enter the changing room of a different sex to their own if accompanied by a parent or carer of that sex;
- Groups of children are not permitted in the changing rooms;
- It is recommended that adults at risk use the disabled toilet located off the function room rather than changing room toilets whenever possible.

If we are made aware that a child or adult self-identifies as a gender that differs from the gender they were assigned at birth, we will work with them and their parents/carers (where it relates to a child or adult at risk) to make reasonable adjustments to changing arrangements to suit their needs.

10. Policy on Unsupervised Children

We require all children under the age of 12 to be supervised by their parent or carer whilst at the Club and outside of any sports sessions, such as coaching lessons or camps. This includes inside the main pavilion and while outside, whether in the car park or playing tennis.

Children under the age of 12 should never be left unsupervised by a parent or carer even if there are other adult Club members or staff present. If the parent or carer is unable to supervise their child, arrangements need to be made by the parent or carer to designate an alternative adult to supervise. The Club (sports secretary or Club coach) and child must be aware of any such arrangements.

Parents/carers are responsible for the behaviour of their child/ren who are over the age of 12 and under the age of 18 and who are onsite unsupervised.

Arriving and leaving a venue alone.

Children under the agreed age of 12 should not be allowed to arrive at or leave the Club alone unless the Club (sports secretary or coach) has written consent from the parent or carer.

11. Transportation of children and/or adults at risk

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure appropriate transport arrangements are in place for their child/ren or adult at risk when travelling to and from the Club.

Coaches and other staff/volunteers are not responsible for transporting children or adults at risk to/from the Club or to other locations (except in a medical emergency).

If a child or adult at risk is taking part in a venue event offsite, such as a match, there will be two adults seated in the front of the vehicle and any child/adult at risk will be seated in the back. An adult will have an emergency contact for the parent/carer.

Unless there is a medical emergency and there is no other option, no child or adult at risk may travel with only one adult in the vehicle, nor will they sit in the front of the vehicle.

Safe and Inclusive Code of Conduct

Staff, coaches and volunteers at the Club should adhere to this Code of Conduct at all times.

- Prioritise the well-being of all children and vulnerable adults at all times;
- Comply with the Safeguarding Policy detailed above;
- Treat all children and adults at risk fairly and with respect;
- Be a positive role model - act with integrity, even when no one is looking;
- Help to create a safe and inclusive environment, both on and off court/rink, and promote the Fair Play values: enjoyment and respect;
- Do not allow any rough or dangerous behaviour, bullying or the use of bad or inappropriate language;
- Report all allegations of abuse or poor practice to the Club Safeguarding Officer;
- Do not use any sanctions that humiliate or harm a child or adult at risk;
- Value and celebrate diversity and make all reasonable efforts to meet individual needs;
- Keep clear boundaries between professional and personal life, including on social media;
- Have the relevant consent from parents/carers, children and adults before taking or using photos and videos;
- Refrain from making physical contact with children or adults unless it is necessary as part of an emergency or congratulatory (e.g. handshake / high five);
- Refrain from smoking and consuming alcohol during Club sporting activities or coaching sessions;
- Ensure roles and responsibilities are clearly outlined and everyone has the required information and training;
- Avoid being alone with a child or adult at risk unless there are exceptional circumstances;
- Do not abuse, neglect, harm or discriminate against anyone; or act in a way that may be interpreted as such;
- Do not have a relationship with anyone under 18 for whom you are coaching or responsible for*;
- Do not to have a relationship with anyone over 18 whilst continuing to coach or be responsible for them.

* It is illegal to have a relationship with someone who is under 18 years old if you are in a position of trust; it is illegal to have a sexual relationship with anyone under the age of 16 whether they give consent or not.

REMEMBER: Doing nothing is NOT an option: report all concerns and disclosures as soon as possible, following the Safeguarding Reporting Procedure. If someone is in immediate danger, call the police.

All children agree to:

- Be friendly, supportive and welcoming to other children and adults;
- Play fairly and honestly;
- Respect Club staff, volunteers and officials and accept their decisions;
- Behave appropriately and respect and listen to the coach;
- Take care of all equipment and Club property;
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of all participants regardless of age, gender, ability, race, culture, religion or sexual identity;
- Not use bad, inappropriate, discriminatory or racist language, including on social media;
- Not bully, intimidate or harass anyone, including on social media;
- Not smoke, drink alcohol or take drugs of any kind on Club premises or whilst representing the Club at competitions or events;
- Not to enter the changing rooms unless accompanied by a parent or guardian;
- Talk to the Club Safeguarding Officer about any concerns or worries they have about themselves or others.

All parents/carers agree to:

- Positively reinforce your child and show an interest in their sport;
- Use appropriate language at all times;
- Be realistic and supportive;
- Never ridicule or admonish a child for making a mistake or losing a match;
- Treat all children, adults, volunteers, coaches, officials and members of staff with respect;
- Behave responsibly at the venue - do not embarrass your child;
- Accept the official's decisions and do not go on court/rink or interfere with matches;
- Encourage your child to play by the rules, and teach them that they can only do their best;
- Deliver and collect your child punctually from the venue;
- If your child is under 12, supervise your child when onsite and not part of a coaching session or supervised club;
- Ensure your child has appropriate clothing for the weather conditions;
- Ensure that your child understands their code of conduct;
- Adhere to your venue's Safeguarding Policy, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, rules and regulations;
- Provide emergency contact details and any relevant information about your child including medical history.

All Club members agree:

- To comply with all Club policies including the Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct;
- To treat each other and visitors to the Club with respect;
- To help to create a safe and inclusive environment, both on and off court/rink, and promote the Fair Play values: enjoyment and respect;
- Not to use bullying, demeaning or inappropriate language;
- To report all allegations of abuse or poor practice to the Club Safeguarding Officer.

The Code of Conduct should be interpreted in a spirit of integrity, transparency and common sense, with the best interests of children and adults at risk as the primary consideration.

This Policy and Code of Conduct is reviewed every 2 years (or earlier if there is a change in national legislation).

This Policy and Code of Conduct was approved on the 2nd of June 2025 board meeting by:

Club Chairman, David Page

Club Safeguarding Officer, Helen Stacy

Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

Safeguarding: protecting **children** from abuse and neglect, preventing the impairment of children's health or development, ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances. Enabling **adults at risk** to achieve the outcomes that matter to them in their life; protecting their right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. Empowering and supporting them to make choices, stay safe and raise any concerns. Beginning with the assumption that an individual is best-placed to make decisions about their own wellbeing, taking proportional action on their behalf only if someone lacks the capacity to make a decision, they are exposed to a life-threatening risk, someone else may be at risk of harm, or a criminal offence has been committed or is likely to be committed.

Abuse and neglect

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 or adult at risk. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness

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

Emotional abuse: The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child or adult at risk such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on their emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child/ adult at risk that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person; not giving them 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, including interactions that are beyond a child or adult at risk's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing them participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing a child or adult at risk 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.

Neglect: The persistent failure to meet a child/ adult at risk's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of their health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child/ adult at risk 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.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's or adult at risk's basic emotional needs. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Additional examples of abuse and neglect of adults at risk

Financial abuse: having money or property stolen; being defrauded; being put under pressure in relation to money or other property; and having money or other property misused.

Discriminatory abuse: treating someone in a less favourable way and causing them harm, because of their age, gender, sexuality, gender identity, disability, socio-economic status, ethnic origin, religion and any other visible or non-visible difference.

Domestic abuse: includes physical, sexual, psychological or financial abuse by someone who is, or has been a partner or family member. Includes forced marriage, female genital mutilation and honour-based violence (an act of violence based on the belief that the person has brought shame on their family or culture). Domestic abuse does not necessarily involve physical contact or violence.

Psychological abuse: including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

Organisational abuse: where the needs of an individual are not met by an organisation due to a culture of poor practice or abusive behaviour within the organisation.

Self-neglect: behaviour which threatens an adult's personal health or safety (but not that of others). Includes an adult's decision to not provide themselves with adequate food, clothing, shelter, personal hygiene, or medication (when indicated), or take appropriate safety precautions

Modern slavery: encompasses slavery, human trafficking, criminal and sexual exploitation, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

- A person who is being abused may experience more than one type of abuse
- Harassment, and bullying are also abusive and can be harmful
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is now recognised as a form of physical, sexual and emotional abuse that is practised across the UK
- Child Sexual Exploitation is recognised as a form of sexual abuse in which children are sexually exploited for money, power or status
- Child trafficking is recognised as child abuse where children are often subject to multiple forms of exploitation. Children are recruited, moved or transported to, or within the UK, then exploited, forced to work or sold
- People from all cultures are subject to abuse. It cannot be condoned for religious or cultural reasons
- Abuse can have immediate and long-term impacts on someone's well-being, including anxiety, depression, substance misuse, eating disorders and self-destructive Conducts, offending and anti-social Conduct
- Those committing abuse are most often adults, both male and female. However, child-to-child abuse also takes place.

Appendix B: Who to call if a disclosure is made to you

If you have a concern, you should first call the Club Safeguarding Officer:

- Helen Stacy (01284 735175 / 07500 631369)

If they are not available, then please call one of the following:

- Police (if you think a child/adult may be in immediate risk of harm): 101 or 999
- Local Authority Children's Services (Customer First): 0808 800 4005
- Local Authority Adult Services (Customer First): 0808 800 4005
- NSPCC Helpline: 0800 800 5000

Other useful numbers are:

- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for concerns/disclosures about a member of staff, consultant, coach, official or volunteer: 0300 123 2044 / LADOCentral@suffolk.gcsx.gov.uk
- Disclosure and Barring Service for concerns/disclosures about a member of staff, consultant, coach, official or volunteer. DBS Helpline: 03000 200 190.
- LTA Safeguarding Team: 0208 487 7000 / safeguarding@lta.org.uk
- EIBA Safeguarding Team: 01664 481900 / joanneshore@eiba.co.uk
- Bowls England Safeguarding Team: 01929 500490 / safeguarding@bowlsengland.com
- Squash Safeguarding Team: 0161 4384302 / safesquash@englandsquash.com

Appendix C: What to do if a disclosure is made to you:

1. Reassure the child/adult that s/he is right to report the behaviour
2. Listen carefully and calmly to him/her
3. Keep questions to a minimum – and **never ask leading questions**
4. Do not promise secrecy. Inform him/her that you must report your conversation because it is in his/her best interest
5. **REPORT IT!** If someone is in immediate danger call the police (999), otherwise talk to the Club Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible.
6. Do not permit personal doubt prevent you from reporting the concern/disclosure. Remember, it is not your responsibility to decide if abuse is taking place, but it **is** your responsibility to report any concerns.
7. **RECORD IT.** Make an immediate objective written record of the conversation using the Reporting a Concern Form (*available on the Club website under policies*). Make certain you distinguish between what the person has actually said and the inferences you may have made. (In the case of the tennis section, this report should be sent to the LTA Safeguarding Team, in the case of the bowls section, this report should be sent to the EIBA Safeguarding Team, within 48 hours of the incident, who will take relevant action and store it safely.)

Appendix D: Indicators of Abuse

Even for those experienced in working with child abuse, it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. Most people are not experts in such recognition, but indications that a child is being abused may include one or more of the following:

- unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries
- an injury for which an explanation seems inconsistent
- the young person describes what appears to be an abusive act involving them
- another young person or adult expresses concern about the welfare of a young person
- unexplained changes in a young person's behaviour e.g. becoming very upset, quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper
- inappropriate sexual awareness
- engaging in sexually explicit behaviour
- distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected
- difficulty in making friends
- being prevented from socialising with others
- displaying variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite
- losing weight for no apparent reason
- becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt

Signs of bullying include:

- behavioural changes such as reduced concentration and/or becoming withdrawn, clingy, depressed, tearful, emotionally up and down, reluctance to go to training or competitions
- an unexplained drop off in performance
- physical signs such as stomach aches, headaches, difficulty in sleeping, bed wetting, scratching and bruising, damaged clothes, bingeing e.g. on food, alcohol or cigarettes
- a shortage of money or frequent loss of possessions

It must be recognised that the above list is not exhaustive, but also that the presence of one or more of the indications is not proof that abuse is taking place.