



# Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

Written in partnership with



## Adoption statement

Abbeycroft Leisure believes that the welfare and safety of children, young people and adults at risk, is of paramount importance and that all children, young people and adults at risk have the right to protection from

abuse and to take part in sport and physical activity without the risk of harm.

This policy and the related procedures have been formally adopted by Abbeycroft Leisure in January 2022 and will be reviewed Jan 2023 or earlier if there is a major change in the organisation or in relevant legislation.



Warren Smyth

Chief Executive

Abbeycroft Leisure

January 2020

<b>Revisions/Amendments</b>	<b>Date</b>
Removal of vulnerable adults replaced with adults at risk	23/1/19
Updated telephone contact numbers and Job Titles	30/08/2019
Next review due	Jan 2020
Lado form updated	Sept 19
Merger will SSL - personnel amended, DBS rechecked every 5 years, inclusion of homophobic transgender bullying, designated lead roles and qualifications including trustee and director details. Reporting requirements for a Charity	Jan 2020
Reviewed annually and as required	
Reviewed safeguard leads updated as per restructure and DSO level 3 added for safeguard leads	28/1/2021 KM
Annual review conducted and Female Genital Mutilation added and useful contacts updated. Frank Carn Pryor Deputy Safeguarding Lead	18/1/2022

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**ABBEYCROFT LEISURE's vision is "Excellence through Innovation and Quality".**

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Safeguarding and ABBEYCROFT LEISURE**

These are the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures to be used by all individuals directly employed by or volunteering for ABBEYCROFT LEISURE. It is the responsibility of all ABBEYCROFT LEISURE employees/volunteers to implement the procedures. Any disciplinary processes linked to safeguarding issues involving ABBEYCROFT LEISURE staff will be handled in accordance with these procedures.

Where individuals are employed by or volunteering for Partner organisations but delivering activity under the ABBEYCROFT LEISURE banner and / or as an ABBEYCROFT LEISURE member of staff, the Child Protection / Safeguarding Policy and Procedures of the Partner organisation will apply. However, as a minimum requirement Partner organisations are expected to:

- Comply with the relevant requirements of this document (grey text boxes)
- Ensure that their own policy and procedures are robust, comprehensive and regularly reviewed
- Promote child protection and the safeguarding of adults throughout the work that they do and the services that they deliver

This document aims to:

- Establish clear lines of communication for any safeguarding issue.
- Provide clarification for all staff and volunteers.

### **1.2 Policy Statement**

ABBEYCROFT LEISURE's Duty of Care:

ABBEYCROFT LEISURE recognises that sport and physical activity can and does have a very powerful and positive influence on young people. Not only can it provide opportunities for enjoyment and achievement; it can also develop valuable qualities such as self-esteem, leadership and teamwork. These positive effects can only take place if sport is in the right hands – in the hands of those who place the welfare of all young people first and adopt practices that support, protect and empower them. Those involved with children in sport can play a vital role by developing an understanding and awareness of safeguarding issues, and in responding to child protection concerns (arising both within and outside the sporting environment).

Most youngsters happily and safely participate in physical activity under the watchful and concerned care of dedicated members of staff and volunteers. However, the reality is also that abuse does take place and in some cases people have been convicted. Every adult has a legal and moral responsibility to protect the young people and adults in sport from abuse.

ABBEYCROFT LEISURE recognises that we have a duty of care towards young and people and can help to protect them from abuse and poor practice.

#### Principles

ABBEYCROFT LEISURE recognises that:

- The welfare of young people and adults is of primary concern (the Children Act 1989 defines a young person as under the age of 18).
- All young people whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.
- It is the responsibility of the statutory agencies to determine whether or not abuse has taken place but it is everyone's responsibility to report any concerns.
- All incidents of suspicious poor practice and allegations of abuse should be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

#### **Raising Awareness of Potential Vulnerability**

This Safeguarding policy is inclusive and the same actions should be taken regardless of the needs or background of the child/adult at risk. Abbeycroft Leisure recognises however, that some people are disadvantaged by their experiences and highlight the following:

Children/adults with Mental Health Challenges are more likely to:

- Self Harm
- Display risk taking behaviour

**Children/adults with disabilities** may be additionally because they may:

- Lack a wide network of friends
- Have significant communication differences – this may include limited verbal communication or they may use sign language or other forms of non-verbal communication
- Require personal intimate care
- Have a reduced capacity to resist either verbally or physically
- Not be believed
- Depend on their abuser for their involvement in sport
- Lack access to peers to discover what is acceptable behaviour
- Have medical needs that are used to explain abuse

**Children/adults from minority ethnic groups** may be additionally vulnerable because they may be:

- Experiencing racism and racist attitudes
- Experiencing racism by being ignored by people in authority
- Afraid of further abuse if they challenge others
- Subject to myths
- Wanting to fit in and not make a fuss
- Using or learning English as a second language

### **1.3 Summary of ABBEYCROFT LEISURE's Responsibilities** ABBEYCROFT LEISURE will:

- Promote a consistent approach to safeguarding across the organisation for the benefit of staff / volunteers, parents / carers and children / young people / adults.
- Act as an advocate for good safeguarding practice, and promote the adoption of the guidance within this document
- Accept the moral and legal responsibility to implement procedures to provide a duty of care for young people and adults, safeguard their wellbeing and protect them from abuse
- Respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of children and young people and adults
- Recruit, train and supervise its employees and volunteers to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect young people from abuse and themselves against false allegations
- Require employees / volunteers to adopt and abide by this Safeguarding Policy and Good Practice Guidelines (provided at induction)
- Respond to allegations appropriately and take appropriate action which may include the use of the Disciplinary Policy.
- Monitor and evaluate the policy every three years, in response to any changes in the relevant legislation or following a significant incident.

### **1.4 Protection of Adults at Risk**

Whilst this policy refers primarily to children and/or young people, the principals and procedures contained within it also apply to the protection of adults at risk usually with those with care and support needs'.

The Care Act 2014 (updated April 2015) puts adult safeguarding on a legal footing for local authorities. This statutory framework sets out to protect adults from neglect and abuse.

Adult Safeguarding is aimed at people with care and support needs who may be in circumstances and at risk of abuse or neglect. In these cases, local services must work together to spot those at risk and take steps to protect them. Abbeycroft Leisure recognises and understands the need to support, cooperate and act in raising concerns to safeguard adults with care and support needs. Abbeycroft Leisure recognises that raising concerns about adults at risk is different from those of young people and the procedure is set out in

Appendix I and the flow chart in Appendix C and will endeavour to take this into account where appropriate.

## **Procedures**

### **2. The Legal Framework**

Everyone who works with children needs to be made aware of the laws that aim to protect children from harm.

#### **2.1 The Children Acts 1989 and 2004**

The Children Act 2004 provides ABBEYCROFT LEISURE and others with powers and duties to protect children.

There are a number of general principles, which need to be borne in mind when considering any part of the legal framework. The child's welfare is of paramount importance.

Under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, a Local Authority (i.e. Social Care Services department) must make enquiries regarding a child's welfare (investigate) where:

- The Authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child living, or found in their area, is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm.
- The enquiries will enable the Local Authority (Social Care Services) to decide whether they should take any specific action to safeguard and/or promote the child's welfare.

It is very important that all investigations into such matters are conducted in accordance within the Suffolk Safeguarding Children Board Policy and Procedures (see [www.suffolkscb.org](http://www.suffolkscb.org)) and in a manner that will not prejudice any further action such as a criminal prosecution. For this reason, if you become aware of something that may need further investigation, do not attempt to investigate the matter yourself. **All investigations will be carried out by the Police / Social Care Services and will be in accordance with Suffolk Safeguarding Children Board guidelines.**

#### **Care Act 2014**

Safeguarding means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.

Where someone is 18 or over but is still receiving children's services and a safeguarding issue is raised, the matter should be dealt with through adult safeguarding arrangements.

The Safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:

Has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

The aims of adult safeguarding are to:

- Stop abuse or neglect wherever possible
- Prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs
- Safeguard adults in a way that supports them in making choices and having control about how they want to live;
- Promote an approach that concentrates on improving life for the adults concerned

- Raise public awareness so that communities as a whole, alongside professionals, play their part in preventing, identifying and responding to abuse and neglect
- Provide information and support in accessible ways to help people understand the different types of abuse, how to stay safe and what to do to raise a concern about the safety or well-being of an adult; and address what has caused the abuse or neglect.

The statutory guidance enshrines the six principals of safeguarding and Abbeycroft Leisure will adopt these principals for the safeguarding of adults:

1. Empowerment – presumption of person led decisions and informed consent
2. Prevention – it is better to take action before harm occurs
3. Proportionality – proportionate and least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented
4. Protection – support and representation for those in greatest need
5. Partnerships – local solutions through services working with their communities
6. Accountability – accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

## 2.2 Safeguarding Adults, including the Mental Capacity Act.

Mental capacity is frequently raised in relation to adult safeguarding. Abbeycroft Leisure acknowledges that all people have capacity to make their own decisions and are to be given all practicable help before anyone treats them as not being able to make their own decisions.

This will include times where it appears an adult has capacity for making specific decisions that nevertheless place them at risk of being abused or neglected. It is the duty of the staff/volunteer or contractor to report their concerns or what they have witnessed to the Lead Safeguarding Officer. If the adult has asked you not to report their concerns, we have to inform the adult it is our policy to report to a senior safeguarding lead and they will discuss the matter with them and their reasoning for not reporting. Unless it is felt that it is in the public interest or that significant harm came to the individual or other individual, Abbeycroft Leisure has a duty of care to safeguard them and others. Different types of abuse may include:-

- **Physical abuse** – including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions
- **Domestic violence** – including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional; so called honour based violence
- **Sexual abuse** – including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.
- **Psychological abuse** – including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.
- **Financial or material abuse** – including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.
- **Modern Slavery** – encompasses slavery, human trafficking and forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters who use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse,

servitude and inhumane treatment. (Refer to the Abbeycroft Leisure Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Policy)

- **Discriminatory abuse** – including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment; because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.
- **Organisational abuse** – including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.
- **Neglect and acts of omission** – including ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating
- **Self-neglect** – this covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

Concerns or referrals will be reported to the Lead Safeguarding Officer in the same way as a concern or referral for a child. It will then be the Lead Safeguarding Officers decision and responsibility to report to the Safeguard Adult Board (LSAB) see Appendix J for details.

### 2.3 Other Documentation

ABBEYCROFT LEISURE will ensure that its policy and procedures follow the guidance given in relevant Government documents, including: □ Every Child Matters: Change for Children (2003)

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2006)
- What to do if you're Worried a Child is being Abused (2003)
- Safeguarding Adults (Care Act 2014, 2015)

## 3 Recruitment and Selection

### 3.1 Applications and Interviews

Recruitment will be carried out for all posts in accordance with Abbeycroft Leisure's procedures. These include the requirement for all applicants to complete an application form and take part in a formal interview. Those involved in the recruitment process should have completed internal training. This training reminds those involved in recruitment to pay particular attention to anything that may require further investigation from a safeguarding perspective and this should be followed up at interview, for example gaps in employment/education history. Particular enquiry should take place where an applicant has not given their current/most recent employer as a referee or if anything else does not seem to 'add up'. During the interview all candidates should be asked questions to measure their understanding of safeguarding issues and a written record of their interview performance should be made using an interview checklist.

### 3.2 Induction and screening of staff

Any staff employed or volunteering for Abbeycroft Leisure are put through a rigorous screening programme. This will include:

- Proof of identification – passport, birth certificate or similar
- Verification of qualifications
- Satisfactory References
- DBS for those in frequent and regulated activity with children and adults

In addition to this, the induction process includes:

- Asking the individual to sign to say that they understand and agree to follow Abbeycroft Leisure's safeguarding policy and procedures.
- Informing the individual of the requirement to complete the online safeguarding course within one month of starting and complete the 'face to face' 3 hour Introduction to safeguarding course or other CPSU recognised qualification within six months.

### **3.3 Disclosure and barring service (DBS) checks**

DBS checks are carried out electronically through the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Prior to any employment commencing Abbeycroft Leisure will complete a Child and/or Adult DBS check and for staff working with adults and/or children in regulated activities. The DBS will be relevant to the age group the individual is working with e.g. if only working with children Abbeycroft will only complete a Child DBS check. Once all recruitment processes and paperwork are complete and subject to a satisfactory DBS where required the individual may start work.

Abbeycroft Leisure always completes Child DBS checks on Lifeguards following the guidance below:

After considerable debate and discussion, CPSU is pleased to be able to provide guidance for leisure centre/pool operators on the eligibility of pool lifeguards for DBS checks as part of a safe recruitment process. The guidance has been produced following ongoing consultation between CPSU and the policy team at DBS. It recommends that, so long as certain conditions are met, the role of pool lifeguard qualifies for an enhanced level DBS check (including a Children's Barred List check when the role is undertaken frequently enough to constitute Regulated Activity).

The guidance can be found at <http://thecpsu.org.uk/resource-library/2017/pool-lifeguards-and-dbseligibility/> - this page also includes links to CPSU Leisure and Safer Recruitment topics pages.

If the DBS contains information of concern, (for example record of previous convictions, offences etc.), a Director will assess the suitability of the applicant for the position.

The DBS check will be completed every 5 years for the relevant personnel as stated above.

### **3.4 Data Protection and Confidentiality – DBS disclosures**

Any information from the DBS will be handled, used and disposed of by Abbeycroft Leisure to comply with the DBS code of practice and the Data Protection Act 1998 and the General Data Protection Regulations 2018.

### **3.5 One off Events**

Abbeycroft Leisure recognises that when using volunteers to assist with events on a one-off basis, it is not always practical to follow all of the screening procedures outlined above.

#### **4. Training**

All staff and volunteers who work with children will receive training in 'Safeguarding and Protecting children' or other CPSU recognised workshop within six months of starting employment. An online safeguarding level 1 will be completed within the first month of starting employment.

The Lead and Deputy Safeguarding Officers and Designated Site contract leads will complete the Leading on Child and Adult Safeguarding courses as outlined in their role descriptions (see Appendices F and G).

Abbeycroft Leisure has the following Level 2 Safeguard trainers:

Tina Campan

Kate Martin

Frank Carn Pryor

#### **5. *Protecting Children***

##### **5.1 Good Practice Guidelines**

This section is an extract from a document entitled: Child Protection Policy and Implementation procedures: Guidelines for Governing Bodies of Sport and Local Authorities.:

All personnel in sport should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to promote the welfare of children and reduce the likelihood of allegations being made. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate within sport:

##### **5.1.1 Good Practice Means:**

- always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging an open environment (e.g. no secrets)
- treating all young people/ adults fairly, and with respect and dignity
- always putting the welfare of each young person first, before winning or achieving goals
- maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with performers (e.g. it is not appropriate to have an intimate relationship with a child or to share a room with them)
- building balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children to share in the decision-making process
- making sport fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play
- ensuring that if any form of manual/physical support is required, it should be provided openly and according to guidelines provided by the NGB. Care is needed, as it is difficult to maintain hand positions when the child is constantly moving. Young people and parents should always be consulted and their agreement gained.
- keeping up to date with the technical skills, qualifications and insurance in sport
- involving parents/carers wherever possible (e.g. for the responsibility of their children in the changing rooms). If groups have to be supervised in the changing rooms, always ensure parents/teachers/coaches/officials work in pairs
- ensuring that if mixed teams are taken away, a male and female member of staff should always accompany them. (NB however, same gender abuse can also occur.)
- ensuring that at tournaments or residential trips, adults should not enter children's rooms or invite children into their rooms

- being an excellent role model – this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people
- giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
- recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people and adults – avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will
- securing parental consent in writing to acting in loco parentis, if the need arises to give permission for the administration of emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment
- awareness of any medicines being taken by participants, or existing injuries
- keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given

There are many physical activities, which by their nature require a degree of physical contact. This can be used appropriately to instruct, encourage, protect or comfort. When physical contact is required both children and adults should be clear about the context and appropriateness of that contact.

Physical contact between adults and children should only be used when the aim is to:

- develop skills or techniques
- to treat an injury or respond to distress
- to prevent an injury
- to meet the requirements of the particular activity

Physical contact should:

- not involve touching genitals, buttocks or breasts
- meet the needs of the child/young person and not the needs of the adult
- be fully explained to the child/young person and, with the exception of an emergency, permission be sought
- not take place in secret or out of sight of others

Some sports have developed specific guidance and where this is the case these should be followed.

### **5.1.2 Practices to be Avoided**

The following should be **avoided** except in emergencies (e.g. a child sustains an injury and needs to go to hospital, or a parent fails to arrive to pick a child up at the end of a session). If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable they should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge in the organisation or the child's parents.

- avoid spending time alone with children away from others
- avoid giving children a lift in your car, and if this is unavoidable, ensure another adult is present

### **5.1.3 Practices Never to be Sanctioned**

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

- Take, invite or allow children to your home where they will be alone with you
- give children lifts in your car without another adult present
- engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- share a room with a child
- allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- reduce a child to tears as a form of control
- allow allegations made by a child to go unrecorded or not acted upon
- do things of a personal nature for children or adults, that they can do for themselves
- administer drugs (including performance enhancing substances)

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

If any of the following incidents should occur, you should report them immediately to another colleague and make a written note of the event. Parents should also be informed of the incident:

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

### **5.2 Code of Ethics and Conduct**

The Government produced Caring for the Young and Guidance for preventing abuse of trust, 1999. The guidance is based on the principle that all organisations involved with caring for young people or adults should have codes of conduct to protect against sexual activity within relationships of trust.

### **5.3 Guidelines for use of Photographic / Filming Equipment at ABBEYCROFT LEISURE Sporting Activities**

Easy rules to remember are:

- If the child is named, avoid using their photograph
- If a photograph is used, avoid naming the child

- Ask for the child's permission to use their image. This ensures that they are aware of the way the image is to be used to represent the sport. A child's permission form is one way of achieving this and should be on all Application forms
- Only use images of children in suitable dress to reduce the risk of inappropriate use

Any events, competitions or sessions in the pool run by ABBEYCROFT LEISURE will follow Swim England Guidelines from Wave power 2016-2019

Professional photographers/filming/video operators wishing to record the event should seek permission in writing from the Centre Manager producing their professional identification for the details to be recorded. Ideally they should request this at least 5 working days before the event or session.

Students or amateur photographers/film/video operators wishing to record the event should seek permission with the event organiser by producing their student or club registration card and a letter from their club/educational establishment outlining their motive for attending the event.

All other spectators wishing to use photographic/film/video equipment should register their intent in writing with the Centre Manager.

#### **ABBEYCROFT LEISURE accreditation procedure**

A record will be made of the individual's name and address and club. Professionals will be asked to register prior to the event and their identification details also recorded. On registering, we will issue an identification label or letter, which will highlight those who have accreditation.

#### **Public Information**

The specific details concerning photographic/video and filming equipment will, where possible, be published prominently in event programmes and announced over the public address system prior to the start of any major event. The wording to read "In line with ABBEYCROFT LEISURE's Photography Policy, we request that any person wishing to engage in any video/zoom or close range photography should register their details with staff at the desk before carrying out any such photography."

#### **Guidelines for Use of Photographic/Filming Equipment at Club Sessions**

There is no intention to prevent club coaches and teachers using a video as a legitimate coaching aid. However, athletes and their parents should be aware that this is part of the coaching programme and care should be taken in the storing of such films. If clubs are concerned that someone that they do not know is using their sessions for photography or filming purposes, this should be in line with Abbeycroft Leisure's photography policy. Permission should also be sought for the use of photographic material for promotional or web-site publications (children's names should not appear with photographs).

## **5.4 Guidelines on Staffing / Supervision ratios for children /young people's activities**

Due to the number of potential variables, it is not possible to recommend "one size fits all" guidance to cover all activities involving children and adults.

It is the responsibility of the centre management team to ensure that those running the activity are suitable to do so

- Have a DBS enhanced certificate
- Have insurance appropriate to their activity and risk assessments in place
- Have suitable codes of practice
- Have appropriate qualification for their activity
- Have an understanding of their responsibility to safeguard children
- Recommended Ratio of adults to participants: under 8: one adult to eight participants, over 8: one adult to sixteen participants. School sports is a ratio of one adult to sixteen children with school teachers present.

## **6. Types of Child Abuse**

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to the or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

### **6.1 Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse 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.

Physical contact during sport should always be intended to meet child's needs, NOT the adult's. The adult should only use physical contact if their aim is to:

- Develop sports skills or techniques
- To treat an injury
- To prevent an injury or accident from occurring
- To meet the requirements of the sport

Examples of physical abuse in sport and physical activity could include when the nature and intensity of training and competition exceeds the capacity of the child's immature and growing body; where drugs are used to enhance performance or delay puberty.

## **6.2 Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is 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 children 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 children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or prevention the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious 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.

Examples of emotional abuse in sport and physical activity could include constant criticism, name-calling, and sarcasm, bullying or unrealistic pressure to perform to high expectations consistently.

## **6.3 Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of pornographic material, or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

In sport, coaching techniques that involve physical contact with children could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. The power of the staff over young performers, if misused, may also lead to abusive situations developing.

## **6.4 Neglect**

Neglect is 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 the parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate caretakers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect or, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Neglect in a sport situation could include staff failing to ensure that children are safe and comfortable, or exposing them to undue cold or to unnecessary risk of injury

Taken from Working Together to Safeguard Children, HM Government (2006), Time to Listen, NSPCC (2003) and Protecting Children – A Guide for Sportspeople, NCF & NSPCC (2005)

## 7. Recognising Signs of Abuse

The first indication that a child is being abused is not necessarily the presence of a severe injury. Concerns that a child is being abused may be raised by the sign of bruises or marks on a child's body or by remarks made by a child, his/her parents or friends, the observation of a child's behaviour or reactions, from an awareness that a family is under stress and may need help with caring for the children or from a number of other factors.

The following information will help you to be more alert to the signs of possible abuse:

**Remember it is not your role to determine if a child is being abused but is your responsibility to record and report your concerns following the procedures outlined in this document.**

### 7.1 Physical Abuse

The following is not a comprehensive or definitive list, but it provides a guide to the more common non-accidental injuries, which may indicate situations where more expert advice should be sought.

Clusters of signs may be more important than any one sign on its own. Much depends on the answers you receive to questions you may have asked to make sense of what has been seen or reported.

#### **Bruises**

- Symmetrical bruised eyes are rarely accidental, although they may occur where there is an injury to the head or nose and blood seeps from the injury site to settle in the loose tissue around the eye (striking as discipline, expecting performance above a child's development level etc.). A single bruise may be the result of an accident or abuse.
- Bruising in or around the mouth (especially in small babies).
- Grasp marks on arms - or chest of a small child.
- Finger marks (e.g. you may see 3-4 small bruises on one side of the face and one on the other).
- Bruising on opposite sides of the body is rarely accidental.
- Outline bruising (e.g. belt marks, handprints).
- Linear bruising (particularly on the buttocks or back).
- Bruising on soft tissue with no obvious explanation.
- Different age bruising (especially in the same area e.g. buttocks).

Most falls or accidents produce one bruise on a single surface - usually a bony protuberance. A child who falls downstairs generally has only one or two bruises. Bruising in accidents is usually on the front of the body as children generally fall forwards. In addition, there may be marks on their hands if they have tried to break their fall.

Bruising may be difficult to see on a dark skinned child. Mongolian blue spots may be mistaken for bruising. These are purplish-blue skin markings most commonly on the backs of children whose parents are not white.

The following are uncommon sites for accidental bruising:

- back of legs, buttocks (except, occasionally, along the bony protuberances of the spine)
- mouth, cheeks, behind the ear
- stomach, chest
- under the arm
- genital, rectal area
- neck

### Bites

These can leave clear impressions of the teeth. Human bites are oval or crescent shaped. If the distance is more than 3 cm across, an adult or older child with permanent teeth must have caused them.

### Burns and scalds

It can be very difficult to distinguish between accidental and non-accidental burns. However, remember:

- A responsible adult checks the temperature of the bath before a child gets in.
- A child is unlikely to sit down voluntarily in too hot a bath and cannot accidentally scald its bottom without also scalding its feet.
- A child getting into too hot water of its own accord will struggle to get out again and there will be splash marks.
- Small round burns may be cigarette burns (but may be friction burns, and accidental, if along the bony protuberances of the spine)

### Scars

Children may have scars, but notice should be taken of an exceptionally large number of differing age scars (especially if coupled with current bruising), unusual shaped scars (e.g. round ones from possible cigarette burns), or of large scars that are from burns or lacerations that did not receive medical treatment (some medical conditions can cause scarring).

### Fractures

A child with a fracture is usually in very considerable pain, and generally will not be moving the part that is fractured. There is usually swelling, and possibly discoloration over the sight of a fracture. However, children sustain fractures relatively easily, and small children may not always be distressed following a fracture. It can therefore be difficult for a parent to be aware that a child has been hurt.

### General Points

Some bruises and marks may seem insignificant by themselves but repeated injuries, even of a very minor nature, may be symptomatic of a family in crisis and, if no action is taken, the child may be injured more seriously.

Any organisation caring for a child is entitled to expect a parent to tell them if there is anything wrong with a child. It is important not to investigate under any circumstances. If there is doubt, you should seek advice.

### Possible Behavioural Signs:

- Fear of parents being approached for an explanation
- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts
- Flinching when approached or touched
- Reluctance to get changed, for example wearing long sleeves in hot weather
- Depression
- Withdrawn behaviour
- Running away from home

## **7.2 Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse may take the form of failure to meet a child's need for affection, attention and stimulation (even though good physical care may be provided) or there may be constant verbal abuse, rejection, scape-goating, threats of violence or attempts to frighten the child. Conversely, some parents may be so over-protective and possessive that they prevent normal social contact or normal physical activity. Both states can be difficult to document or evaluate, but may have crippling long-term effects on a child's development.

Children suffering from emotional abuse may exhibit these behavioural symptoms:

- excessively clingy or attention seeking behaviour
- low self esteem
- apathy
- fearful or withdrawn
- constantly seeking to please
- over-ready to relate to anyone, including strangers

## **7.3 Sexual abuse**

Below is a list of behavioural signs which have been known to act as indicators of sexual abuse. However, it is important to realise that many of these signs could equally be indicative of a range of different problems.

There are very few physical signs of sexual abuse and the majority of those will require a medical diagnosis or forensic evidence. Pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease are examples.

Because those who sexually abuse children take great care to ensure that they have the compliance and silence of the child, it is very difficult to know what is happening unless a child tells someone. It is important that anything a child says, which may indicate they have been abused, is taken very seriously and is referred to those who are skilled in the investigation of the abuse of children.

### Possible Behavioural Signs:

- Mood changes, tantrums, aggression, sudden school difficulties
- Insecurity
- Sleep and eating disorders
- Poor self-esteem, anxiety, depression, despair
- Withdrawal, secretiveness
- Poor peer relationships
- Lies, stealing, arson
- Running away
- Suicide attempts, self poisoning, self mutilation
- Unexplained money, gifts
- Premature understanding of sex, inappropriate sex play
- Seductive behaviour, promiscuity
- Abuse of solvents, drugs, alcohol

### **7.4 Neglect**

Neglect includes not only poor physical care and inattention to the child's basic needs e.g. for regular feeding, cleanliness and clothing but also a failure to provide the necessary stimulation to sustain behavioural and emotional development.

Warning signs include:

- Poor growth for which no medical cause is found, with a dramatic improvement on normal diet away from home
- Unkempt, dirty appearance
- Medical needs of child not met – failure to seek medical advice for illness, severe untreated nappy rash, missed immunisations
- Development delay
- Lack of social responsiveness
- Self-stimulating behaviour such as head banging or rocking
- Repeated failure to prevent (accidental) injury.

### **7.5 Channel**

Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. Providers should understand when it is appropriate to make a referral to the Channel programme.

Channel is managed by the Local Authority and consists of a multi-agency panel. Search locally in your area to find the contact for your Channel panel.

### **Spotting the signs and getting support**

Signs that may indicate a child is being radicalised include:

- isolating themselves from family and friends
- talking as if from a scripted speech
- unwillingness or inability to discuss their views
- a sudden disrespectful attitude towards others
- increased levels of anger
  - increased secretiveness, especially around internet use

Children who are at risk of radicalisation may have low self-esteem, may be victims of bullying or discrimination. Extremists might target them and tell them they can be part of something special, later brainwashing them into cutting themselves off from their friends and family

## 7.6 Prevent

The Government's 2015 Counter Terrorism and Security Act places a duty on specified authorities to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". Identified agencies include, schools including childcare providers, colleges, universities, young offender institutions, police, prisons, NHS bodies and LA's.

This involves:

- Respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism
- Prevent people from being drawn into terrorism
- Work with sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation

For childcare providers, the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage sets standards for learning, development and care for children from 0 – 5, thereby assisting their personal, social and emotional development and understanding of the world. There are four general themes: risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training and IT policies. It makes clear that to protect children in their care, providers must be alert to any safeguarding and child protection issues in the child's life at home or elsewhere. Early years providers must take action to protect children from harm and should be alert to harmful behaviour by other adults in a child's life.

## Reporting a concern

As with managing other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Children at risk of radicalisation may display different signs or seek to hide their views.

Radicalisation of children and young people is child abuse. If you suspect that a child or young person is being radicalised or is vulnerable to radicalisation you **must report this immediately** to your safeguarding lead or seek advice from the Police or children's services if your safeguarding lead is not available.

Although the leisure industry is not a specified authority staff may encounter radicalisation of children and young people within this sector and therefore all staff should be made aware of the signs and behaviours as with any aspect of child abuse.

You may also have concern about an adult being drawn into radicalisation and therefore may wish to report your concerns. You can either speak to the Channel Panel, adult social services or the police.

## 8. Bullying

Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. It is important to recognise that the bully may be another young person or an adult.

The competitive nature of sport makes it an ideal environment for the bully. The bully in sport can be:

- a parent who pushes too hard;
- a coach who adopts a win-at-all costs philosophy;
- a player who intimidates another;
- an official who places unfair pressure on a person.

Bullying can be:

- Physical: e.g. hitting, kicking and theft;
- Verbal: e.g. name-calling, constant teasing, sarcasm, racist or homophobic taunts, threats, graffiti and gestures;
- Emotional: e.g. tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating and ignoring;
- Sexual: e.g. unwanted physical contact or abusive comments.

There are a number of signs that may indicate that a young person is being bullied:

- Behavioural changes such as reduced concentration and/or becoming withdrawn, clingy, depressed, tearful, emotionally up and down, reluctance to go to school, training or sports club;
- A drop off in performance at school or standard of play;
- Physical signs such as stomach ache, headaches, difficulty in sleeping, bed-wetting, scratching and bruising, damaged clothes and bingeing for example on food, cigarettes or alcohol;
- A shortage of money or frequent loss of possessions.

### **Homophobic and Transphobic bullying**

All bullying has the potential to cause significant harm (physical, emotional or psychological) to young people. Transphobic and homophobic bullying can be hard to spot as it may be happening out of view of adults.

**Homophobia** is having or showing a dislike or prejudice against homosexual people.

Homosexuals are people that are attracted to people of their own sex.

**Transphobia** is having or showing a range of negative attitudes, feelings or actions towards transgender or transsexual people or toward transsexuality (people who experience a gender identity that is not consistent with their assigned sex and that they want to permanently transition to the gender with which they identify, usually using some medical intervention). Transphobia and homophobia are often driven by a lack of understanding which can strengthen stereotypes. It's important that all staff understand gender identity issues, not only so they can recognise inappropriate language but also ensure that staff themselves don't use homophobic or transphobic language and know how to challenge negative behaviours. Generally, transphobic and homophobic bullying looks like other kinds of bullying. It may include:

- Verbal abuse- including spreading rumours that someone is gay, with its implications that this is somehow inferior
- Physical abuse –including hitting, kicking, sexual assault, threatening behaviour, and theft or destruction of property
- Cyberbullying – using online spaces to spread rumours about someone or exclude them; this can also include text messaging, including video and picture messaging
- Exclusion and isolation – for example, always being picked last for the team

Therefore, create an inclusive environment, keep track of any bullying and escalate as with other safeguarding concerns. Raise awareness, provide support and signpost where appropriate. Bullying and abuse on the basis of a person's gender identity must be challenged with the same energy as other equality issues.

### **8.1 Action if Bullying is Suspected**

If bullying is suspected and the bully(ies) are children, follow the guidance below in the first instance but if this fails to resolve the problem within a short period of time, if the bullying incident is severe in nature (e.g. of a serious offending / criminal nature), or if the bully is an adult, you should report this immediately by following the procedures set out in Section 10.

#### **Action to help the victim and prevent bullying in sport:**

- Take all signs of bullying very seriously
- Encourage all children to speak and share their concerns (It is believed that up to 12 children per year commit suicide as a result of bullying, so if anyone talks about or threatens suicide, seek professional help immediately). Help the victim to speak out and tell the person in charge or someone in authority. Create an open environment
- Investigate all allegations and take action to ensure the victim is safe. Speak with the victim and the bully(ies) separately
- Reassure the victim that you can be trusted and will help them, although you cannot promise to tell no one else
- Keep records of what is said (what happened, by whom, when)

#### **Action towards the bully (ies) when the bullying is by children and not of a serious offending / criminal nature:**

- Talk with the bully (ies), explain the situation, and try to get the bully (ies) to understand the consequences of their behaviour. Seek an apology to the victim(s) □ Inform the bully's / bullies' parents initially and report on progress to them
- Insist on the return of 'borrowed' items
- Impose sanctions as necessary
- Encourage and support the bully(ies) to change behaviour
- Keep a written record of action taken

### **8.2 Female Genital Mutilation**

FGM is a form of child abuse. It's dangerous and a criminal offence in the UK. We know:

- there are no medical reasons to carry out FGM
- it's often performed by someone with no medical training, using instruments such as knives, scalpels, scissors, glass or razor blades
- children are rarely given anaesthetic or antiseptic treatment and are often forcibly restrained
- it's used to control female sexuality and can cause long-lasting damage to physical and emotional health.

FGM can happen at different times in a girl or woman's life, including:

- when a baby is new-born

- during childhood or as a teenager
- just before marriage
- during pregnancy.

### **Signs of Female Genital Mutilation**

Unexpected or long absence from school

A female relative has undergone FGM

A special occasion ceremony takes place where a child is 'prepared for marriage'

### **Signs and Symptoms**

Having difficulty walking

Spending longer in the bathroom

Appearing quiet, anxious or depressed

Reluctance to go to doctors for routine appointments

## **9. Responding to Disclosure, Suspicions and Allegations of Abuse**

It is not the responsibility of employees to decide whether or not child abuse is taking place but it is their responsibility to act on concerns, and notify the appropriate person or organisation. If a child says or indicates that they are being abused or information is obtained which gives concern that a child maybe being abused, immediate action should be taken. There is a responsibility to protect children in order that appropriate agencies can make enquiries and take any necessary action to protect the child.

When abuse is suspected there are a number of ways in which suspicion may arise, such as:

- An allegation made by a child or adult;
- A child approaches an activity deliverer and makes a disclosure;
- An employee observes a change in a child's behaviour;
- An employee notices physical damage to the child;
- A child demonstrates inappropriate sexual knowledge for his or her age.

The person receiving information concerning disclosure should:

- React calmly so as not to frighten the child;
- Take what the child says seriously, recognising the difficulties inherent in interpreting what is said by a child who has a speech disability and/or difference in language;
- Say little but give the child time to talk;
- Keep questions to the absolute minimum and ensure that no leading questions are asked;
- Not make negative comments about the possible abuser or make assumptions;
- Not make promises or agree to keep secrets;
- Make a full record of what had been said, heard and/or seen as soon as possible, using **Appendix C Safeguarding Reporting Form**;
- Pass the information on to the relevant person, using the flowchart provided, see **Appendix D Reporting Concerns**.

Abbecroft Leisure will store these Safeguarding Reporting Forms securely as a record and these will only be shared with the relevant investigating agencies such as Children's Services and / or the police.

## 10. Referral Procedures

These procedures are also outlined in a flowchart in Appendix D, Reporting Concerns.

Internal issues should be reported immediately to the CM and reported in writing within 24 hours. Do not keep a copy of the reporting forms for yourself, and do not discuss the matter or show the form to anyone else unless named above. Make sure the form is placed in a sealed envelope marked Company Confidential. In the event of the CM not being available contact the Manager on Duty (MOD).

If you are initially uncertain what to do, the CM and/or General Manager will offer advice and support and will discuss concerns with you. You may seek advice from the NSPCC, CPSU, customer first, Helpline or from Children's Services. This should not delay a referral being made in the event of potential abuse. If you are concerned about anything relating to the welfare of a child or young person in your care, it is your duty to report it.

Safeguarding matters will **not** be investigated by Abbeycroft Leisure employees.

## 9. What to Do if You Suspect Possible Child Abuse / Poor Practice from those who work with children or those in a position of trust

### 9.1 Duty to Refer

There is a duty on all ABBEYCROFT LEISURE employees / volunteers to record and report all concerns, no matter how small, relating to the welfare of children. This should be done according to the procedures outlined below.

The ABBEYCROFT LEISURE procedures should be used to respond to:

- For all allegations against Trust staff.
- When disclosure happens during an activity put on by ABBEYCROFT LEISURE
- When a child discloses to a member of ABBEYCROFT LEISURE staff or volunteer.
- When possible abuse is observed during an activity held by ABBEYCROFT LEISURE.

Concerns about suspected poor practice should be reported in the same way as abuse (see Section 10 below). It is essential to report any concerns immediately to the Lead or Deputy Safeguarding lead and if required they will report to the Local Authority Designated Officers (LADO). Full guidance on making a referral to the LADO can be found in Suffolk Safeguarding children Board document Arrangements for Managing allegations of Abuse Against people who work with children or those who are in a position of trust R:\Section 1 Purpose - Policies & Planning\1.21 Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults\Sources of Information

### 9.2 Referral Procedures

Note: These procedures are also outlined in a flowchart in Appendix C

9.2.1 Make a careful note of what you see / what you are told, using the ABBEYCROFT LEISURE reporting form (Appendix B).

9.2.2 If you need to ask questions of a child / children, do not ask leading questions, only ask open, prompting questions to clarify the nature of the concern, e.g. How did that happen? Listen carefully to anything the child tells you. If you have observed signs of an injury you may ask the child how the injury happened, but do not make the child feel as though they are being interrogated.

9.2.3 Remember, your role is to note and pass information on accurately, not to conduct the early stages of an investigation.

9.2.4 If the explanations offered still cause you concern (e.g. if the explanation for an injury is inconsistent with the signs you have observed, make a careful note of what you have heard and observed and sign and date the form. It is important that the form is handwritten or typed and printed off at the time, not typed up later. Date, time and sign the form.

**Always report your concerns if there is ANY possibility that abuse may have taken / may be taking place**

9.2.5 Immediately report your concerns to the Designated Person as listed below, forwarding the reporting form to that individual within 24 hours. Do not keep a copy of the reporting form for yourself, and do not discuss the matter or show the form to anyone else unless named above. Make sure the form is sent in a sealed envelope marked Private and Confidential.

9.2.6 In the first instance you should contact the ABBEYCROFT LEISURE Lead Child Protection Officer, unless the concern is about the Lead Child Protection Officer themselves:

**Kate Martin 07956 772548**

9.2.7 If the ABBEYCROFT LEISURE Lead Child Protection Officer is unavailable **and the concern is about an ABBEYCROFT LEISURE Employee / Volunteer**, contact Human Resources:

**Karen Points (Strategic Director) 07908 788520**

You should also inform the Lead Child Protection Officer at the earliest possible opportunity.

9.2.8 If the ABBEYCROFT LEISURE Lead Child Protection Officer is unavailable **and the concern is NOT about an ABBEYCROFT LEISURE Employee / Volunteer**, contact one of the Deputy Child Protection Officers. This includes potential abuse taking place outside of the sporting environment, or within the sporting environment but not involving a ABBEYCROFT LEISURE employee / volunteer:

Deputy Child Protection Officer: Nigel Snape 07523 846518

Again, you should also inform the Lead Child Protection Officer at the earliest possible opportunity.

9.2.9 **If the concern is about the Lead Child Protection Officer**, contact the Human Resources Department as above in 10.2.7.

9.2.10 In the event of all the relevant contacts listed above being unavailable, the 'no delay' principle should be used i.e. report to Social Care Services or the Police immediately, and

forward the reporting form to them within 24 hours. You should also inform the Lead Child Protection Officer at the earliest possible opportunity (unless the referral is about them):

Customer First Suffolk Social Services	0808 800 4005
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	0300 1232044
Suffolk Police	in an emergency 999, non emergency 101

9.2.11 Child protection matters must not be investigated by ABBEYCROFT LEISURE employees/volunteers. However, you may be asked to take part in a strategy discussion if Social Services consider that there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm.

9.2.12 If you are initially uncertain what to do, the Child Protection Officers named above are able to offer advice and support and will discuss concerns with you at any point. You may also seek advice from the NSPCC Helpline (0808 800 5000) or from Social Care Services (Mon – Fri, 08.00 – 18.00 0808 800 4005 Out of Office Hours, 01473 299669). However, this should not delay a referral being made in the event of potential abuse.

**9.3 Handling Allegations of Abuse / Concerns of Poor Practice Against a ABBEYCROFT LEISURE Employee / Volunteer once a Referral has been Made** Once an allegation or complaint has been received by the Lead Child Protection Officer / HR Director, the relevant procedures will be used. This includes:

9.3.1 Liaison between HR and the Lead Child Protection Officer to ensure both parties are aware of the situation. This should be done immediately, but the unavailability of either party should not cause a delay in referral to Social Care Services (or the Police) under 10.3.5 below.

9.3.2 Informing the Line Manager of the individual concerned, within 24 hours of receiving the allegation.

9.3.3 Deciding if the matter concerns possible abuse or possible poor practice. This should be a joint decision between the Lead Child Protection Officer and HR, but if either party is unavailable the decision should be made by the other so as not to cause a delay in referral to Social Care Services (or the Police in an emergency) under 10.3.5 below. **If there is any doubt at all about whether the matter concerns possible abuse, Social Care Services will be consulted for advice.**

9.3.4 If the matter concerns possible poor practice then Disciplinary Procedures (and timescales) will be used.

9.3.5 If the matter concerns possible abuse, then Social Care Services (or the Police in an emergency) will be informed immediately as well as implementing Disciplinary Procedures.

In accordance with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, referral will be made to Social Care Services (or the Police in an emergency) if it is alleged that the individual concerned 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 s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

9.3.6 The employee or volunteer may need to be suspended from work whilst the matter is investigated. However, this will not be automatic and will take into account the relevant circumstances. In some cases, it may be sufficient to ensure that the employee or volunteer does not have unsupervised access to children.

9.3.7 Where Social Care Services (or the Police in an emergency) are informed, any internal investigation or action will not commence until this can be done without prejudicing their procedures. Where internal procedures are underway relating to poor practice and potential abuse comes to light, the internal procedures may be suspended pending Social Care Services / Police action. A decision about immediate disciplinary action (e.g. temporary suspension pending the outcome of Police investigation) will be made in consultation with the statutory agencies involved.

9.3.8 Where the matter can be dealt with without prejudice to Social Care Services or Police Procedures, disciplinary action may be taken in accordance with the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

9.3.9 Any inappropriate behaviour by an employee that causes harm to a child in the care of Abbeycroft Leisure or in the course of an individual's work for Abbeycroft Leisure will be treated as a serious disciplinary offence and may result in dismissal.

9.3.10 The Lead Child Protection Officer will make a decision whether to share information with other relevant organisations, following the principles outlined in Section 10.9.1.

9.3.11 The Lead Child Protection Officer will record all actions taken above using the Form for Recording Actions Following a Referral (Appendix D), which will then be kept in lockable storage (see 10.9.3).

#### **9.4 Handling All Other Allegations of Abuse / Concerns of Poor Practice (i.e. Not Against a ABBEYCROFT LEISURE Employee / Volunteer)**

9.4.1 The Lead Child Protection Officer (or the Deputy if the Lead Officer is unavailable) is responsible for deciding of what course of action to take. This will be done in consultation with the other Child Protection Officers, with Social Care Services or with the Child Protection in Sport Unit as appropriate. If the Lead Child Protection Officer is unavailable, the Deputy Officer will inform the Lead Officer of the incident and any action taken at the earliest opportunity

**9.4.2 If there is ANY doubt regarding whether an incident should be referred to Social Care Services, they will always be contacted and asked for advice**

9.4.3 The Lead Child Protection Officer will make a decision whether to share information with other relevant organisations, following the principles outlined in Section 10.9.1.

9.4.4 The Lead Child Protection Officer will record all actions taken above using the Form for Recording Actions Following a Referral (Appendix D), which will then be kept in lockable storage (see 10.9.3).

**9.5 Responding to a Direct Disclosure from a Child**

**Skills and behaviours when talking to parents, children and young people- within the context of safeguarding**

Stay calm and listen carefully, offer reassurance to the child or young person

Use reflective listening and ask open non judgemental questions "who, where, when"

Do not promise the child confidentiality

Record (verbatim)

Seek further advice from your safeguarding lead and MASH team if required.

Explain to the parents that you are referring your concern, unless by doing so you think you put the child at increased risk of significant harm.

Taken from Suffolk Safeguarding Children Board 'Introduction to Safeguarding workshop'.

**9.6 Support for those Involved in Child Protection Incidents / Allegations** In so far as it does not prejudice or impact on any investigations being undertaken by statutory agencies, ABBEYCROFT LEISURE will ensure that all parties involved will be kept updated and informed about the progress of the investigation and subsequent processes.

**9.6.1 Support for the Reporter of Suspected Abuse**

Listening to a disclosure from a child or witnessing evidence of abuse / poor practice can be a stressful and upsetting experience, as can making a referral afterwards especially if it is against a colleague.

ABBEYCROFT LEISURE recognises that individuals may require support in the aftermath of involvement with a child protection incident. Counselling is available for employees / volunteers of ABBEYCROFT LEISURE through its HR provider.

Additionally, any concerns about making an allegation against a colleague are covered by the Whistleblowing Policy, and ABBEYCROFT LEISURE will fully support any individual that makes an allegation in good faith against an ABBEYCROFT LEISURE employee / volunteer

### **9.6.2 Support for the Child (ren) / Parent(s) involved**

Social Care Services are able to advice on the support available for those affected either directly or indirectly by child abuse. Additionally, The British Association for Counselling Directory is available from The British Association for Counselling, 1 Regent Place, Rugby CV21 2PJ, Tel: 01788 550899, Fax: 01788 562189, E-mail: [bac@bacp.co.uk](mailto:bac@bacp.co.uk), Internet: [www.bacp.co.uk](http://www.bacp.co.uk).

### **9.6.3 Support for ABBEYCROFT LEISURE Staff / Volunteers Accused of Abuse / Poor Practice**

Any allegations against ABBEYCROFT LEISURE members of staff or volunteers will be dealt with within the strict guidelines of its Disciplinary Procedures, unless advised otherwise by Social Care Services or the Police. All information will be dealt with in the strictest confidence (see 10.9 below) and the individual will be able to access counselling through Abbeycroft HR provider. (See 10.6.1 above)

### **9.7 Sharing Concerns with Parents**

ABBEYCROFT LEISURE is committed to working in partnership with parents / carers in all aspects of a child's welfare. Therefore, if an individual has concerns about a child it is important to discuss these concerns with their parent or carer in the first instance, but only if appropriate (see below). This may help to explain the reasons for the physical signs / changes in behaviour which have aroused suspicion. For example, changes in behaviour may be due to a death in the family, a break-up of the parents' marriage or the birth of a new brother / sister, rather than a symptom of abuse.

**However, you SHOULD NOT share concerns with a parent or carer if it may place the child at greater risk, i.e. the parent or carer may be responsible for the abuse. If this is the case, report your concerns following the procedures outlined in Section 10.2 above and Social Care Services will advise the Child Protection Officer whether or not to contact the parents.**

### **9.8 Provision of Advice**

Occasionally you may be asked to give advice on safeguarding or child protection matters. Refer these queries to the ABBEYCROFT LEISURE Lead Child Protection Officer (or one of the Deputy Officers if the Lead Officer is not available), or to Social Care Services. The Lead / Deputy Child Protection Officer will keep a written record of what advice was given using the Record of Advice Form in Appendix F, which will be securely stored by the Lead Child Protection Officer (Deputy Child Protection Officers should forward their completed Record of Advice Forms to the Lead Child Protection Officer within 24 hours).

### **9.9 Confidentiality**

#### **9.9.1 Sharing Information with other Organisations**

Sometimes, it is only when information from several sources has been shared and combined that it becomes clear that a child is at risk. Personal information about children and their

families will usually be confidential and should not be disclosed to a third party without the consent of the subject. **However, the law allows for the disclosure of confidential information where this is necessary to safeguard a child or children in the public interest.**

Disclosure of confidential information must be justifiable in each case, according to the particular facts of the case and must be limited to those people who need to know in order to take appropriate action. ABBEYCROFT LEISURE employees / volunteers can supply personal information to other bodies such as Social Care Services or the Police – refer to 'What to do if you are Worried a Child is being Abused', DoH (2003).

When a complaint, allegation, positive DBS check concerns staff, it is possible that this individual may be working for other local organisations such as Local Authorities, School Sport Partnerships or sports clubs. If this is the case, it may be appropriate to share information with these organisations. However, before doing so careful consideration needs to be given regarding whether there is a legitimate reason for sharing this information.

ABBEYCROFT LEISURE has adopted the Information Sharing Protocol for Sport compiled by the CPSU. Please refer to the Protocol for full details. However, the basic principles are outlined below:

- The decision to share information will be made by the Lead Child Protection Officer (or one of the Deputy Child Protection Officers if the Lead Officer is unavailable), who will normally seek advice from Social Care Services. The CPSU or SAFE may also be approached for advice
- No other employee / volunteer of ABBEYCROFT LEISURE should take it upon themselves to share information with anyone unless this is under the referral procedures outlined in 10.2 or 10.4
- **Where a concern has been reported to Social Care Services or the Police, they will be consulted before information is shared with any other organisation, and they will also be made aware of all the other organisations an individual is known to work for**
- The decision whether to share information will be based on the level of concern and on whether there is a reasonable belief that there would be an increased risk to a child / children if the information was not shared (i.e. whether it is in the public interest to share this information)
- The only information that will be shared is that which is necessary to inform an organisation of the potential risk to children
- When the information relates to a positive DBS disclosure, the only information to be shared will be the fact that, through standard screening checks, the individual was deemed unsuitable to work with young people
- Information will only be shared with organisations for whom individual is known to be currently working or involved in a recruitment exercise.
- Information will only be shared with the individual in each organisation who has nominated responsibility for Child Protection / Safeguarding
- If an individual is working for a club or county association and / or holds a National Governing Body qualification then the nominated officer within the NGB will be informed in the first instance (rather than the local organisations), although they may then advise the Lead Child Protection Officer to contact the local organisation(s)
- Consent to share information will usually be sought from the individual concerned, unless this would increase risk of harm. Advice should normally be sought from Social Care

Services and / or the Police before seeking consent. However, if consent is not given information can still be shared if it is believed that this would be in the public interest, i.e. there is believed to be an increased risk if the information is not shared

- A record will be kept by the Lead Child Protection Officer about the reasons for the decision whether to share information or not and, if relevant, what information has been shared and with whom (Appendix D)

### **9.9.2 Dealing with Complaints**

For complaints from members of the public (parents / carers / participants) about poor practice or possible abuse from ABBEYCROFT LEISURE employees / volunteers, the Complaints Policy, including timescales for responding to complaints will apply. However, we will not reveal confidential information about any investigations / disciplinary procedures taking place (if the case is referred to Social Care Services or the Police, they may contact the person making the complaint as part of their investigation).

### **9.9.3 Storing Information**

The storage of DBS information is outlined in Sections 3.3 and 3.5 above. All other written information (Reporting Forms and Record of Advice Forms) will be stored by the Lead Child Protection Officer in a locked filing cabinet, with no electronic records being kept. Access will be restricted to the ABBEYCROFT LEISURE Child Protection Officers, to the Human Resources Department (if appropriate) and to Social Care Services or the Police.

### **9.10 Reporting Requirements for Charities**

All reportable safeguarding concerns must also be reported to the Charities Commission. The Safeguarding lead will advise Abbeycroft Company Secretary Lynda Pope to complete the report via the online portal. Guidance is available in R:\Section 1 Purpose - Policies & Planning\1.21 Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults\Sources of Information.

## **Appendix A – For All abbeycroft Leisure Staff or volunteers**

# **Child Protection**

## **What to do if you have any concerns**

Included in your induction will be an introduction to child protection. This provides information about good practice. As an ABBEYCROFT LEISURE employee, you will also be required to attend a SAFE child protection session on 'Safeguarding and Protecting Children'.

If at any time during your work for ABBEYCROFT LEISURE, you are concerned that some form of abuse is taking place, then it is vital that you follow these simple steps:

- 1. Using the form overleaf, note down what has been said / witnessed, but remember – it is not your responsibility to investigate the situation**

2. Report your concerns **IMMEDIATELY** to the **ABBEYCROFT LEISURE** Lead Child Protection Officer. They will decide what needs to be done and who needs to be informed:  
 Kate Martin 07956772548
3. If you cannot get hold of the Lead Child Protection Officer and the concern is about a member of **ABBEYCROFT LEISURE** staff, then contact  
 Karen Points: 07908 788520
4. If you cannot get hold of the Lead Child Protection Officer and the concern is **NOT** about a member of **ABBEYCROFT LEISURE** staff, then contact one of the Partnership's Deputy Child Protection Officers:  
 Nigel Snape 07775 801191
5. In an emergency, contact **Suffolk Social Care Services** on 0808 800 4005 or a direct dial referral to the **MASH** 03456 066167 or **Suffolk police** 101.
6. If you want general advice about these issues you can also contact the **Suffolk Local Safeguarding Children's board professional consultation line** on 03456 061499 (9.00 to 5.00 Mon-Fri) or **NSPCC helpline** on 0808 800 5000

**REMEMBER – IF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT ANYTHING RELATING TO THE WELFARE OF YOUNG PEOPLE OR ADULTS AT RISK IN YOUR CARE IT IS YOUR DUTY TO REPORT IT.**

A copy of **Abbeycroft Leisure's Safeguarding policy** is available on request from your line manager, **Abbeycroft Leisure** 01440 765139 or on [www.AbbeycroftLeisure.co.uk](http://www.AbbeycroftLeisure.co.uk)

## **Appendix B – Reporting Form**

### **FORM FOR RECORDING ALLEGATIONS OR CONCERNS ABOUT CHILDREN**

Please use this form as a prompt, recording any additional information on the back or on another sheet of paper. Forms can be handwritten or typed and printed off, but they must be signed, dated and timed.

**REMEMBER – your job is not to investigate, but to record accurately all information you receive or signs and symptoms you observe. Only fill in the details you know.**

<b>Your name</b>
<b>Your position</b>
<b>Centre</b>

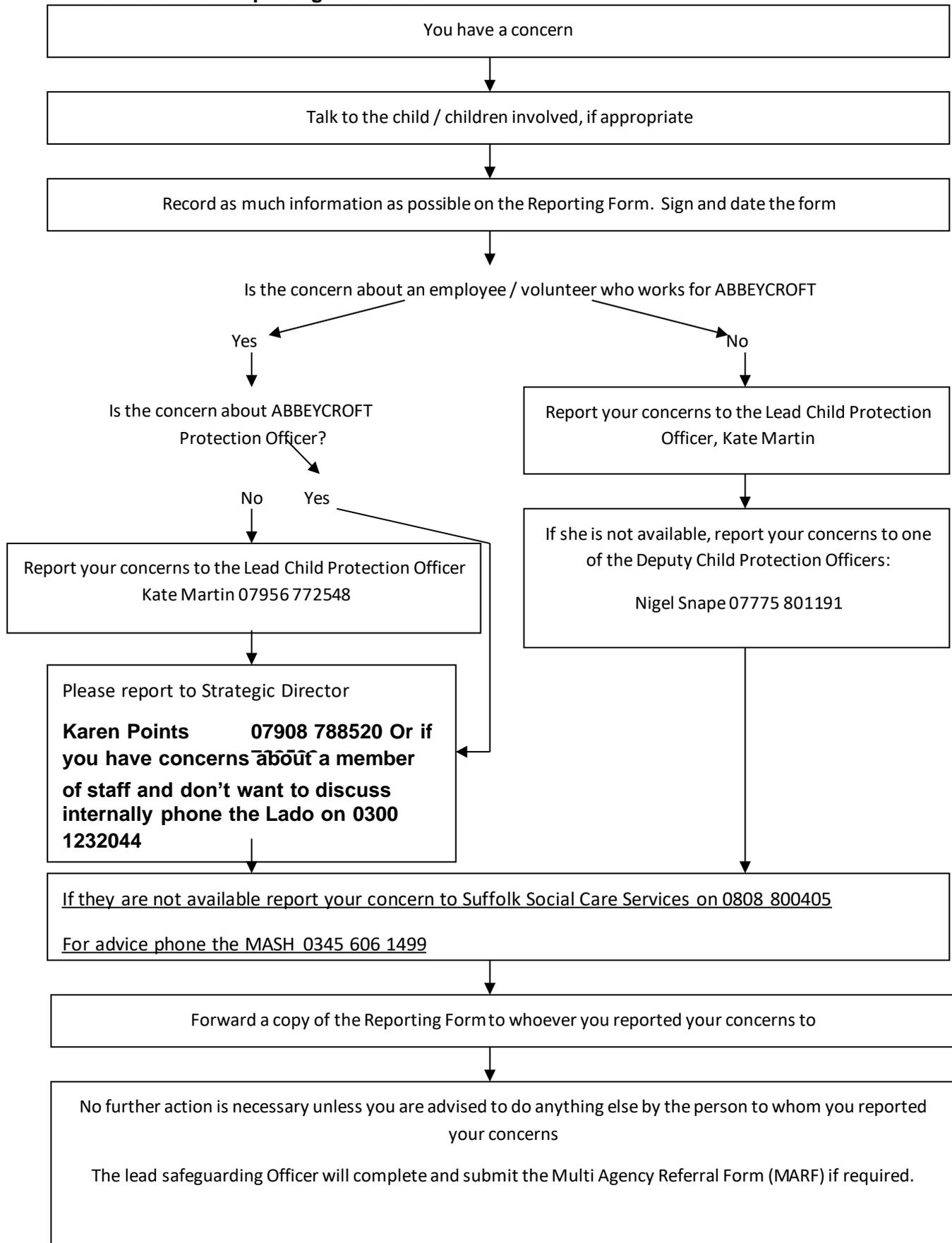
<p>Child's details (name, address, contact number, age / DOB etc.):</p>	<p>Child's parents or guardian's details, including contact number (where known):</p>
<p>Describe what the suspicion/allegation/concern is here (using child's words where possible):</p>	
<p>Describe fully any signs, symptoms you or others have observed (include here what the child has told you):</p>	
<p><u>Where</u> did this occur (as far as you know)?</p>	
<p><u>When</u> did this happen (as far as you know)?</p>	
<p>If some earlier signs/symptoms were noticed before today, <u>when and where</u> was this?</p>	

Record details of anyone else who may have been present or have relevant information:	
Record who has been informed (this includes who was informed using the ABBEYCROFT LEISURE referral procedures, and whether the parents / carers have been consulted) and any actions agreed:	
Signed:	Date and Time:
Job title:	Telephone Number:

**SEND OR HAND THIS FORM (in envelope marked Private & Confidential, Marked 'For Addressee only' and within 24 hours) TO THE PERSON TO WHOM YOU INITIALLY REPORTED YOUR CONCERNS:**

**Kate Martin, LEAD CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER, ABBEYCROFT LEISURE, Bury St Edmunds Leisure Centre, Beetons Way Bury ST Edmunds Suffolk IP33 3TT**

**Appendix C – Flow chart for Reporting concerns**



**Appendix D - Form for Recording Actions following a Referral**

Please refer to the procedures outlined in the Safeguarding Policy



**Management of Allegations against People in a Position of Trust**

**REFERRAL TO LOCAL AUTHORITY DESIGNATED OFFICER**

This referral form must be completed and e-mailed to [LADO@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@suffolk.gov.uk) within 24 hours if it is alleged that a person who works with children (employed or volunteer) has;

- Behaved in a way that has harmed 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 may pose a risk of harm to children

If there are immediate safeguarding concerns in relation to a child, you will also need to complete a

[Multi-agency Referral Form](#) (MARF) and send this to [Customer.First@suffolk.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:Customer.First@suffolk.gcsx.gov.uk)

If you wish to discuss your referral with a LADO or for advice or guidance, please telephone the LADO on **0300 123 2044**.

**Date of incident:**

**Date Referrer notified of incident:**

**Date of Referral to LADO:**

**Information about Person being referred:**

Name:

Role/Job Title:

Date of Birth:

Ethnicity:

Home Address:

Name and address of workplace:

Is the referred person aware that you have referred? Yes/No

**Does the person being referred have children of their own? Yes/No**  
**(complete details below)**

	Child One	Child Two	Child Three
Name of child:			
Date of birth:			
Home address:			

**Referrers details:**

If you are not the senior manager with responsibility for safeguarding, all referrals should be discussed with the designated person prior to being sent.

Name:

Position:

Organisation Name and Type (e.g. residential home, nursery, school etc):

Organisation Address:

Telephone Number:

Referrers Email:

**Details of the designated Senior Manager with responsibility for safeguarding or the referred persons line manager if different to above**

Name:

Contact Number:

Email:

**Details of the child/children involved in the allegation:**

	Child One	Child Two	Child Three
Name:			
Date of birth:			
Ethnicity:			

Home address:			
Has the child's parents/carers been informed?			
If the child has an allocated Social Worker, please provide their details			
<p><b><u>Details of the incident and resulting allegation/concern being raised:</u></b></p> <p>Any injury to victim, date, time and place of incident if known and views of the child where known</p>			
<p><b><u>What actions have been taken to date, if any?</u></b></p>			
<p><b><u>Have there been previous concerns in relation to person being referred?</u></b></p>			

**THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO COMPLETE AND RETURN THIS FOR**

**Appendix E Record of Advice Form Details of person giving advice**

Name	
Job Title	
Contact Number	
Date Advice Given	

**Details of person asking for advice, if known (some people may prefer to remain anonymous)**

Name	
Role (i.e. staff, parent etc.)	
Contact Number	

**Details of what question was asked or what advice was requested**

--

**Details of what advice was given (including names of any organisations / individuals that you advised the person to contact)**

Send or hand this form (in an envelope marked 'private and confidential' to the ABBEYCROFT LEISURE Lead Child Protection Officer, Kate Martin Newmarket Leisure Centre, Exning Road Newmarket CB8 0EA

## Appendix F Role Description for ABBEYCROFT LEISURE Lead Child Protection Officer

The ABBEYCROFT LEISURE Lead Child Protection Officer is responsible for:

- Leading on the development and implementation of ABBEYCROFT LEISURE's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
- Ensuring that all relevant staff receive training on the Policy and Procedures
- Ensuring that the Policy and Procedures are updated as necessary
- Leading on the promotion of good safeguarding practice across the organisation.
- Keeping their Child Protection and Safeguarding knowledge up-to-date and as comprehensive as possible, through attendance at relevant meetings and training
- Acting as the lead contact for ABBEYCROFT LEISURE on all matters relating to child protection and safeguarding. This will include contact with:
  - Other members of the ABBEYCROFT LEISURE team
  - Other Partner Organisations
  - The wider sporting community
  - The general public
  - Social Care Services / the Police
  - Other Child Protection organisations such as the CPSU, SSB and SAFE
    - Disseminating relevant information to the ABBEYCROFT LEISURE team, including:
      - Training opportunities
      - Information gained from training attended by the Lead Officer themselves
      - Changes to legislation
      - New guidance from the CPSU
- Receiving and acting upon any reported Child Protection concerns. This includes:
  - Deciding when to refer to Social Care Services / the Police
  - Deciding when it is appropriate to share information with other organisations
  - Seeking advice from Social Care Services, the CPSU or HR Department as appropriate before making either decision
  - Ensuring that all of the above follows the procedures outlined in the Safeguarding Policy
- Ensuring that all Child Protection Reporting Forms and Record of Advice Forms are stored securely and are only made available to others on a 'need to know' basis
- Arranging for the Partnership's Deputy Child Protection Officers to take over the Lead role if the Lead Officer is planning to be on leave / absent for a substantial period of time

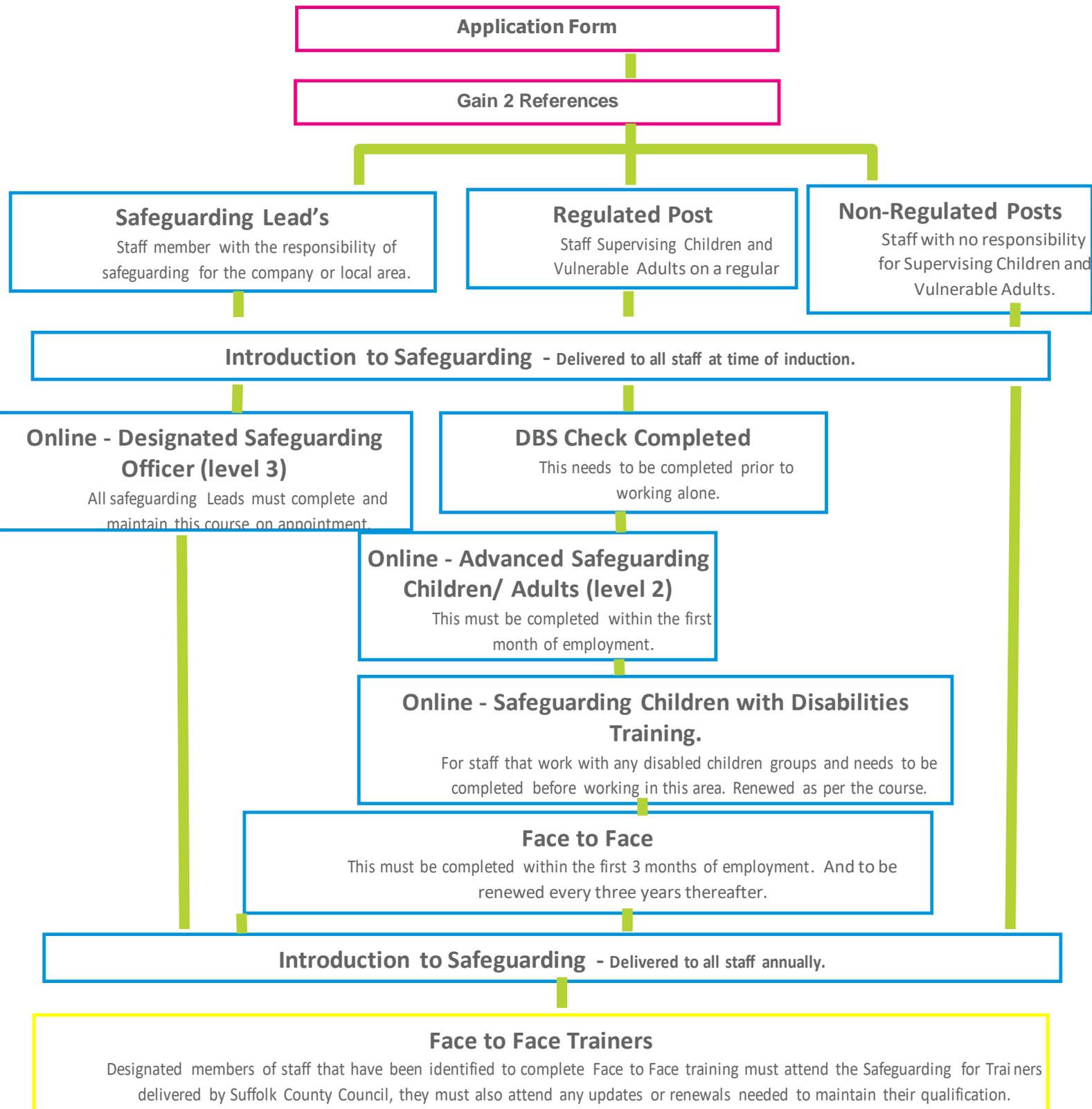
Hold the Designated safeguarding officer Level 3 qualification

## **Appendix G Role Description for ABBEYCROFT LEISURE Deputy Child Protection Officer**

The ABBEYCROFT LEISURE Deputy Child Protection Officers are responsible for:

- Supporting the Lead Child Protection Officer (CPO) on the development, implementation and review of ABBEYCROFT LEISURE's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
- Supporting the Lead CPO on the promotion of good safeguarding practice across the wider Partnership, including promoting the adoption of the guidance within the Partnership's Safeguarding Policy or similar
- Keeping their Child Protection / Safeguarding knowledge up-to-date and as comprehensive as possible, through attendance at relevant meetings and training
- Providing advice upon request (normally when the Lead CPO is unavailable) to any individual / organisation, and recording the details of this advice on a Record of Advice Form
- Receiving and acting upon any reported Child Protection concerns when the Lead CPO is unavailable. This includes:
  - Deciding when to refer to Social Care Services / the Police
  - Deciding when it is appropriate to share information with other organisations
  - Seeking advice from Social Care Services, the CPSU or HR Department as appropriate before making either decision
  - Ensuring that all of the above follows the procedures outlined in the Safeguarding Policy
- Forwarding any completed Child Protection Reporting Forms and Record of Advice Forms to the Lead CPO
- Taking over the Lead CPO role if the Lead CPO is on leave / absent for a substantial period of time
  - Hold the Designated safeguarding officer Level 3 qualification

# Safeguarding Training



# Safeguarding Contact List

## Company Contacts



Trustee Safeguarding Lead

Timothy Mutum

Director Safeguarding Lead

[karen.points@acleisure.com](mailto:karen.points@acleisure.com)  
07908 788520

Company Safeguarding Lead

[kate.matin@acleisure.com](mailto:kate.matin@acleisure.com)  
07956778548

Assistant Safeguarding Lead

[frank.carn-pryor@acleisure.com](mailto:frank.carn-pryor@acleisure.com)  
07739 049263

## Local Contacts

Hadleigh/ East Bergholt/  
Holbrook

Tracey.loynds@acleisure.com  
07837 220779

Sudbury Safeguarding Local  
Lead



Newmarket Leisure Centre  
Safeguarding Local Lead

[lauren.riding@acleisure.com](mailto:lauren.riding@acleisure.com)  
07970628027



Haverhill/ Trumpington  
Safeguarding Local Lead

[nigel.snape@acleisure.com](mailto:nigel.snape@acleisure.com)

Brandon safeguarding local  
lead

[Dan.ward@acleisure.com](mailto:Dan.ward@acleisure.com)

Mildenhall Hub  
Safeguarding Local Lead

07960 645666  
[Alison.blackwell@acleisure.com](mailto:Alison.blackwell@acleisure.com)  
07939 410979

## Appendix I



Bury Self Centre

[matt.hickey@acleisure.com](mailto:matt.hickey@acleisure.com)

07904153789



Bury St Edmunds/  
Thurston/Skyliner

[kate.martin@acleisure.com](mailto:kate.martin@acleisure.com)

07956778548

Local Authority Designated Officer (team)

LADOCentral@suffolk.gcsx.gov.uk

0300 1232044

MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub)

01473 263200

0345 606 1499 (9.00am - 5.00pm)

Multi Agency SafeguardingHub

Customer First (public)

0800 800 4005 24hrs

Customer first (professionals)

0345 6066167

Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership (Children)

[www.suffolkscb.org.uk](http://www.suffolkscb.org.uk)

0808 800 4005 24hrs

Professional consultation line

0345 6061499

**Emergency:- 9-999 Non Emergency - 101**

# Safeguarding Standard

At Abbeycroft Leisure we recognise our duty of care to safeguard children and adults involved in our activities. The aim of our standard is to help staff recognise and understand safeguarding issues and therefore maintain high standards in safeguarding at our facility.

## **Helping you keep your family safe...**

- Always use the changing rooms provided.
- During school swimming lessons we ask all adults to use the cubicles provided and to close shower curtains/doors.
- We operate a family friendly photography policy however please do not use your camera including mobile phone camera in the changing rooms and toilets.
- Know where each member of your family is at all times.

## **Appendix I**

### **Abbeycroft help keep you safe by completing the following:**

- Comprehensive Safeguarding policy
- Rigorous recruitment policy and DBS check for all relevant staff
- Safeguard training for all relevant staff
- All hirers/clubs using our facilities have DBS, Safeguard Policies and coaches hold relevant qualifications

If you have any welfare or safeguarding concerns during your visit to any of our centres, please speak to a member of staff immediately they will then liaise with our Designated Safeguarding Team to deal with your concern.

Kate Martin 07956772548 or go the General Manager at the site