

SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTING ADULTS AT RISK POLICY

CORE PRINCIPLES AND BOCCIA ENGLAND RESPONSIBILITIES

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1. Foreword from the chair of Boccia England

Boccia England has the responsibility for creating a safe, fun and inclusive environment for everyone to participate in boccia. I am therefore delighted to introduce our policy for Safeguarding and Protecting Adults at Risk.

As a National Governing Body of sport, Boccia England has a moral and legal obligation to ensure that the highest possible standard of care is provided for everyone involved in the sport. Therefore, through the development, communication and implementation of the policy we aim to maintain and increase the professionalism and safeguards of good practice that have been set as standard throughout our sporting landscape.

We have created a policy that promotes welfare, equal opportunities and safeguarding regardless of whether you are a participant, coach, volunteer or spectator. In addition, we have actively highlighted throughout the policy, that it is the responsibility of everyone within boccia to highlight areas of abuse and/or poor practice and to act in response to any concerns.

By developing policies and procedures such as this policy, Boccia England is demonstrating its commitment to establishing an environment where all participants in our sport can be supported to achieve positive and rewarding outcomes.

Maggie Else,
Chair, Boccia England



2. Policy statement

Boccia England (BE) acknowledges the need for an individual policy for adults at risk, in line with the considerations of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, to promote equal opportunities and provide a clearer framework for those adults with physical, mental health and learning disabilities.

Vulnerable people are at heightened risk of abuse and discrimination because of their susceptibility and many experience this in all walks of life. Practice has shown that vulnerable people who are victims of abuse in the sports setting can be reluctant to report their experiences for fear of losing a positive and important part of their lives. Therefore it is essential that BE, as a national governing body, and its associated clubs and personnel, are aware of the indicators of abuse and can recognise and act appropriately to protect potential victims.

Abuse can occur in many situations, including the home, workplace, day centre, at the shops, on the bus, in educational institutions and of course in a boccia Club.

For the majority of adults at risk, boccia will be a positive and rewarding experience, however, there is a growing recognition that sport generally provides easy access to vulnerable people for those who wish to perpetrate abusive behaviour for their own gratification. Therefore, BE is aware of the need to protect adults at risk from those individuals who may seek to harm them in a boccia environment. Although this document mirrors the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy for practical reasons, there are fundamental differences between the policies.

The primary difference in addressing adult and child abuse relates to the adult's right to self-determination. Adults may choose not to act at all to protect themselves and only in extreme circumstances will the law intervene. This is not the case for children because they are minors under the Children Act 1980 and this legislation can be used quickly and effectively to ensure protection from abuse once it has been recognised.

In cases of suspected adult abuse it is important to recognise that assertive persuasion to encourage the individual to report or take action against an abuser or abusive situation may have negative outcomes for the adult at risk and could be detrimental to their wellbeing by causing them further harm. Therefore, the protection of adults at risk from abuse is a more complex process than child protection and requires policy and procedures that reflect this.



Policy users need to develop an understanding that protecting adults at risk necessitates a more supportive and advisory approach in response to reporting abuse, than in child protection situations where the legal framework is clear and definitive and requires stipulated responses. In serious situations the child can be removed from the abusive environment, for adults at risk is not always possible or appropriate to achieve this level of safety.

Each adult at risk is a unique individual with varying degrees of need and ability. Some people will have a combination of physical and learning disability, others may have one or the other; some may have mental health needs and a combination of other complex disabilities such as epilepsy, cerebral palsy, diabetes, down's syndrome, visual or hearing impairment.

The appropriateness of involving support staff in any boccia and welfare related decision making will depend on the individual needs and circumstances of the vulnerable adult and, most of all, upon their wishes. Often adults at risk feel strongly that they want to maintain independence and make decisions for themselves; such views should be encouraged and supported wherever possible. Ideally, good practice suggests a partnership model of working involving the coach, teacher or club officer, the adult at risk and their support worker. In these circumstances it is important that the adult at risk is at the centre of the decision making process. If the person has capacity they need to consent to their support worker being involved.

The provisions in the Mental Capacity Act 2005 should be considered in relation to adults at risk and decision-making. Those without the capacity to make decisions under this legislation will be more dependent on their support worker or responsible adult in the decision making process.

The Act provides that a person is unable to make a decision for him/herself if s/he is unable;

- To understand the information relevant to the decision.
- To retain that information.
- To use or weigh that information as part of the process of making the decision.
- To communicate their decision (whether by talking, using sign language or any other means).
- A person is not to be regarded as unable to understand the information relevant to a decision if s/he is able to understand an explanation of it given to him in a way



that is appropriate to his circumstances using simple language, visual aids or any other means).

- The fact that a person is able to retain the information relevant to a decision for a short period only does not prevent him from being regarded as able to make the decision.
- The information relevant to a decision includes information about the reasonably foreseeable consequences of - deciding one way or another or failing to make the decision.

BE encourages the individual's development of independence, confidence and self-esteem on a personal level and in their boccia activities. Hence it is important that everyone in boccia is aware of the need to balance the involvement of support workers and the needs and wishes of individual boccia participants in cases where adults at risk are concerned.

The following policy document draws from and includes relevant legislation and government guidance such as.

- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
- The Data Protection Act 1998.
- The Police Act 1997.
- No Secrets guidance (2000) regarding adults at risk.
- Human Rights Act 1998.
- No Secrets 2000
- Equality Act 2010

BE recognises its responsibility to promote good practice to protect adults at risk and this policy sets out the principles within which BE will operate.



3. General principles

In order to ensure that procedures are followed to their utmost, BE will follow the principles set out below:

- Take a constructive approach to safeguarding adults, aiming to provide a positive sport experience.
- Emphasise that everyone in sport has a shared responsibility to ensure the safety and well-being of all adults.
- Continually seek ways to improve the safety and well-being of all adults who play boccia.
- Recognise that all persons, regardless of age, gender, ability, disability, ethnicity, religious belief and sexual identity, have a right to play boccia in an enjoyable and safe environment and to be safeguarded from abuse.
- Safeguard and promote the interests and wellbeing of everyone involved in the delivery of boccia, (athletes, participants, coaches, volunteers and spectators of the sport).
- Make the welfare of adults at risk paramount, even where the rights and needs of the other adults that work with them are overridden in order to provide the necessary protection to these individuals.
- Take all reasonable steps to safeguard adults at risk from harm, discrimination, abuse and degrading treatment and to respect their rights, wishes and feelings.
- Recruit, train and supervise its employees and volunteers who work with adults at risk to promote best practice to safeguard and protect adults at risk from abuse.
- Take seriously all suspicions and allegations of poor practice or abuse and respond swiftly and appropriately to them in accordance with appropriate procedures.
- Recognise that ability and disability can change over time, such that some adults may be additionally vulnerable to abuse, for example those who have a dependency on others or have different communication needs.
- Recognise that a disabled adult may or may not be identified as an adult 'at risk' and provide support and advice to sport venues and people working in sport.



- Ensure that personal information is treated in strict confidence, within the limits of the law,(principally the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Data Protection Act 1998).
- Provide guidance and resources (including signposting) and provision of training to support staff, volunteers, members and clubs to implement this and their safeguarding policies.
- Where appropriate, work in partnership with parents, guardians and suport workers to support the adult at risk and, where practicable, co-operate with their wishes to achieve the best outcomes for the vulnerable adult.
- Ensure that the policy is appropriately communicated and understood throughout the organization, including the staff, volunteers, members, accredited clubs and the wider boccia community.



4. Boccia England responsibilities

BE recognises its responsibility both morally and legally and will commit itself to promote good practice to protect adults at risk.

In doing so, we recognise that the organisation, its' board and sub-committees, our affiliates and members have a responsibility to:

- Safeguard and promote the interests and wellbeing of everyone involved in the delivery of boccia, (athletes, participants, coaches, volunteers and spectators of the sport).
- Seek the views of its members regardless of age or ability and where appropriate incorporating these views into how the organisation is run.
- Respect and promote the rights and welfare of all involved in boccia.
- Maintain confidentiality with respect to the Human Rights Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1988.
- Recruit, select, train and supervise its employees and volunteers so as to promote best practice to safeguard and protect young people from abuse.
- Ensure that the BE Safeguarding and Protecting Adults at Risk Policy is communicated, understood and implemented throughout the organisation, its affiliates and membership.
- Promote the development of a safe environment in its clubs through its accreditation programme.
- Respond to any complaints about poor practice or allegations of abuse.

All other bodies involved in the sport of boccia in England which provide opportunities to work with adults at risk should agree to abide by this policy and adopt the good practice identified. When working with such bodies, BE will provide a copy of this policy and seek confirmation that it will be adopted.

BE will:

- Appoint a Lead Safeguarding Officer (LSO).
- Convene a Case Management Team (CMT) to determine cases as and when appropriate.



- Ensure all cases of poor practice that may be abuse and any allegations of abuse are investigated and where appropriate, referred to other agencies.
- Provide opportunities (Sports Coach UK: Safeguarding and Protecting Children, Child Protection in Sport Unit; Time to Listen) for designated Club Officers and other delivery staff and volunteers to access training and guidance opportunities.
- Where there are concerns about possible abuse, ensure that these are referred appropriately to the statutory agencies to investigate whether or not abuse has taken place.
- Make decisions on misconduct and/or poor practice within agreed timescales.
- Inform all appropriate individuals and bodies of decisions within agreed timescales.
- Maintain records of suspended, disciplined and disqualified persons and where appropriate, refer people disqualified to relevant government agencies for consideration by the Disclosure and Barring Service.
- Work in partnership with athletes and parents/support workers to ensure that we understand the needs of our athletes and work with them accordingly.



5. Good practice guidelines

The definition of a vulnerable adult is currently set out in No Secrets (2000). The Law Commission review in 2011 suggested a revised definition of an 'adult at risk'. The steering group for safeguarding adults in sport agreed to use this revised definition with slight amendments and have added some sport context for clarity.

A definition for safeguarding adults

When we are speaking about adults at risk we are referring to those who have health or social care needs (irrespective of whether or not those needs are being met by social care) and who are unable to safeguard themselves as a result.

While we recognise that some people will be vulnerable due to their learning disability or mental health needs there are also those adults who are at risk due to a specific circumstance they may find themselves in, for example: domestic abuse, forced marriage, sexual or commercial exploitation (this is not an exhaustive list).

In sport this may look like:

- An elite athlete being groomed for sexual abuse by his or her coach.
- A member of a learning disabled sports club being financially exploited by another club member.
- A young woman confiding in her coach about a forthcoming holiday where she believes she will be married against her will.
- A club which insists on receiving a parental consent form before taking a 20 year old participant with a mild learning disability on an away day trip.
- A coach who regularly neglects the individual needs of disabled participants when training.

It can be difficult to distinguish poor practice from abuse, whether intentional or accidental. It is not the responsibility of any individual involved in boccia to make judgements regarding whether or not abuse is taking place, however, all BE personnel have the responsibility to recognise and identify poor practice and potential abuse. It is important to understand exactly what is meant by abuse. There is sometimes a fine line between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, and it is important that anyone



connected with BE understands this boundary. It is also important that the signs of abuse are understood, as the victims of abuse often feel unable to tell anyone.

Whilst these procedures are designed to ensure that incidents are brought to light, and dealt with properly, it is equally important to try to ensure that such incidents do not occur in the first place. There are a number of 'good practice' rules that help avoid potential situations occurring.

Good practice

In order for BE to establish an environment that is safe, enjoyable, educational and enables people to positively contribute to the sport; delivery partners must be extra vigilant in creating a safe culture. This includes:

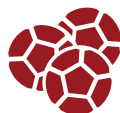
- Monitoring and evaluating projects and communicating with participants, members and partners.
- Setting high standards and ensuring that these are consistently adhered to.
- Engaging, understanding and promoting the culture of boccia.
- Respecting cultural difference.
- Ensuring an inclusive 'Club For All' ethos.
- Establishing an environment that encourages feedback and where issues can be discussed.
- Acknowledging the increased vulnerability of specific individuals.
- Recognising that adults at risk have an increased vulnerability to poor practice and abuse.
- Implementing a club code of conduct for players, coaches, volunteers and spectators.
- The implementation of a procedure for the use of photography and filming equipment and mobile phones etc.
- Encouraging a partner-wide approach to safeguarding, in order to create better communication, advice and support mechanisms.
- Ensuring that coaching ratios are appropriate for the number of individuals in attendance. Lone working and one-to one environments are not advised.



Poor practice

The following are regarded as poor practice and should be avoided:

- Includes any behaviour that contravenes existing 'Codes of Conduct', infringes an individual's rights and/or reflects on a failure to fulfil the highest standards of care.
- Unnecessarily spending excessive amounts of time alone with an individual or vulnerable adult away from others.
- Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Allowing or engaging in inappropriate touching of any form.
- Using language that might be regarded as inappropriate by the adult at risk, including comments regarding disability which may be hurtful or disrespectful.
- Making sexually suggestive comments, even in jest.
- Reducing an adult at risk to tears as a form of control.
- Letting allegations made by an adult at risk go un-investigated, unrecorded, or not acted upon.
- Assisting with tasks of a personal nature that adults at risk can do for themselves.
- Taking adults at risk alone in a car on journeys, however short.
- Inviting or taking adults at risk to your home or office where they will be alone with you.
- Sharing a room with an adult at risk.



6. Roles and responsibilities of designated officers and groups

Club Welfare Officer (CWO)

The CWO is the person appointed at club level and provides the essential point of contact for welfare within the club. A CWO should be selected for their skills and knowledge, such as being able to handle matters of a safeguarding nature in an appropriate and confidential manner. They should be approachable for any concerns regarding safeguarding to be reported and be appropriately supported by other members of the club.

Role related to Adults at Risk Policy

- To provide information and advice on protection for adults at risk within the club. To ensure that the club adopts and follows the BE Safeguarding & Protecting Adults at Risk Policy and procedures, understands its responsibilities under the SVG Act, and promotes awareness of these within the club.
- To be a confirmation signatory, verifying the identity of individuals completing DBS disclosure applications.
- To keep records of all those who have been vetted within the club and to ensure that DBS checks are updated on at least a three yearly basis.
- To receive information from club staff, volunteers, vulnerable adults, parents, support workers or advocates who have protection concerns regarding adults at risk and record it.
- To assess the information promptly and carefully, clarifying or obtaining more information about the matter as appropriate.
- To report concerns where appropriate to the police in consultation with the individual or their support worker.
- To report referrals or concerns to the BE LSO as soon as possible in line with BE procedures.
- To ensure that adequate information is available at the time of referral and that the referral is confirmed in writing, under confidential cover, where possible using the BE Incident Report Form.
- To advise club officers regarding the appropriate levels of protection required during the training of adults at risk from all individuals working with vulnerable groups in the club.
- To advise the club of relevant training opportunities



Boccia England's Lead Safeguarding Officer (LSO)

Every sports organisation should designate a person to promote the welfare of adults within the sport. This should be someone with good knowledge and understanding of the issues that vulnerable adults face in the sporting environment and a focused approach to addressing concerns, raising awareness and improving practice. Knowledge of relevant legislation, government guidance, the BE Safeguarding and Protecting adults at risk policy and procedures is essential. As is the ability to confront poor and discriminatory practice and also to promote and demonstrate high standards of anti-discriminatory practice in relation to safeguarding and abuse.

The role includes managing the DBS process, coordinating the dissemination of relevant policy, procedures & resources as well as supporting Club Welfare Officers in their roles. The LSO also provides administrative support for the CMT as well as managing the administration of cases of poor practice/abuse within the sport.

Role related to Policy

- To liaise with the specialists and investigators who may be brought in to help with adult at risk cases regarding individual cases, proposed policy and guidance.
- To convene and chair the CMT as required.
- To take a lead role in maintaining and reviewing the BE Safeguarding and Protecting Adults at risk Policy.
- To co-ordinate the dissemination of this policy, procedures and related resources throughout BE.
- To represent BE at external meetings related to the protection of adults at risk.
- To keep up to date with own knowledge and skills.

Boccia England Case Management Team (CMT)

The purpose of the CMT is to ensure all decisions relating to safeguarding adults at risk are reached following a fair, open and transparent process. The group comprises a minimum of three people, including the LSO and a senior manager with the exact membership determined by the nature of the case and availability of members. The group may call upon whatever professional input they feel is required.

Role related to Policy

- To make decisions on the initial approach to all reported cases related to the welfare and protection of adults at risk. That is, to decide on the 'route' a case will



take, either internally or via external referral to statutory agencies, but may also include making decisions in relation to concerns arising from information gathered in the recruitment process.

- To make initial decisions as to the 'internal' level each case shall be dealt with. For example minor poor practice cases may be referred back to the club complaints or disciplinary process.
- To advise others within BE about actions they may need to take, such as initiating disciplinary procedures.
- To confirm all final decisions relating to Safeguarding Referrals or DBS Disclosures.

7. Definitions of abuse

Indicators of abuse

Recognising abuse is not always easy. BE and our safeguarding partners acknowledge that staff, coaches, volunteers and officials whether in a paid or voluntary capacity, are not experts at such recognition. Even for those experienced in working with adult safeguarding, it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place.

It is not the responsibility of those working with adults at risk in our sport to decide whether or not an individual is being abused; however it is their responsibility to share concerns.

It is however the responsibility of everyone in boccia to be alert to the indicators of abuse and to act upon any concerns in line with BE policy and procedures relating to the protection of adults at risk .

Indicators of abuse 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 and improbable.
- A disclosure made by an adult at risk describing what appears to be an abusive act.
- An expression of concern from a third party about the welfare of an individual/ unexplained changes in an individual's behavior, such as loss of confidence, low self-esteem.



- Becoming quiet and withdrawn, sudden outbursts of temper or uncharacteristic changes in behavior, tearful, depressed, angry, watchful and frightened.
- Engaging in sexually explicit behaviour.
- Distrust of others, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
- Difficulty in making friends and socialising contrary to previous social behaviour.
- Being prevented from socialising with other individuals by a support worker or person in a position of authority.
- Displaying variations in eating patterns including overeating, loss of appetite or stealing and concealing food.
- Unexplained weight loss, deterioration in personal hygiene and physical appearance.
- Refusal/reluctance to undress or change for sporting activities.

The government guidance *No Secrets* (guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect adults at risk from abuse) provides the following as classifications of abuse:

Neglect and acts of omission

“Including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.”

In a sporting context it may be when an athlete’s personal or intimate requirements are ignored, particularly if they are disabled, or where an athlete is not cared for in a way appropriate or according to their needs. It could also mean failing to ensure they are safe or exposing them to harm.

Physical abuse

“May involve hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanctions.”

In a sporting context it might also occur if a person is forced to train beyond his/her capabilities, or the intensity of training disregards an individual’s ability/impairment.

Physical abuse may also occur through encouraging the inappropriate use of substances to stimulate performance.



Sexual abuse

“Including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented, or could not consent, or was pressured into consenting.”

In a sporting context it could range from sexually suggestive comments to actual sexual contact or could involve inappropriate photography or videoing, for the gratification of the viewer.

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.”

In a sporting context, indicators could include:

a support worker or coach subjecting a player to constant criticism, shouting, name-calling, sarcasm, bullying or discriminatory behaviours or prejudicial attitudes;

a support worker or coach putting a player under unrealistic pressure in order to perform to high expectations.

Financial or material abuse

“Including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.”

In a sporting context, indicators could include:

blackmailing a player by requiring financial or material payment in return for certain benefits such as sporting awards or complements; charging vulnerable individuals more than the standard fee for participation in sporting activities.

Discriminatory Abuse

Can occur in the shape of psychological, emotional and physical abuse and is based on the grounds of; racism, sexism and any form of abuse targeting a person’s ability/disability, age, sexual identity or religious belief.



Cyber bullying

This is a form of bullying which uses technology to deliberately harm or upset others. This type of bullying can happen in many ways, using mobile phones or the internet and could include:

- Sending hurtful messages or using images.
- Leaving malicious voicemails.
- A series of silent calls.
- Creating a website about other people to humiliate them.
- Exclude them from chat/messaging rooms/areas.
- 'Happy slapping'- sending video/images of people being bullied, so others can see.
- Bullies might be using this form of bullying because it's very difficult to trace the senders.

Bullying

"Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves"

BE is committed to fostering a caring, friendly and safe environment for everyone involved in boccia so they can participate in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in boccia. If bullying does occur, all boccia players, coaches, volunteers or support workers should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding (emotionally and physically), sending hurtful text messages, tormenting, (e.g. hiding kit or equipment, threatening gestures).
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
- Racist racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.
- Homophobic because of, or focusing on the issue of a person's sexual orientation.
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumors, teasing.

Competitive sports such as boccia are an ideal environment for the bully.

The bully in boccia can be a:

- Parent who pushes too hard.
- Coach who adopts a 'win at all costs' philosophy.



- A boccia player who intimidates or ridicules a peer.
- Club official who places unfair pressure on a person.
- Spectator who constantly shouts abuse.

Signs and symptoms

The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to all individuals, particularly vulnerable groups. An individual may indicate, by signs or behaviour, that he or she is being bullied. Coaches and those in staffing positions should be aware of these possible signs that they should investigate, especially where an individual:

- Says they are being bullied.
- Is unwilling to go to club sessions.
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence.
- Regularly feels ill before training sessions.
- Has clothes torn or possessions damaged.
- Has possessions go “missing”.
- Asks for money.
- Steals money or parts with their own money (to pay bully).
- Has unexplained cuts, bruises or injuries.
- Is frightened to say what’s wrong.
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above.

Dealing with allegations of bullying of vulnerable adults

- Discuss the potential courses of action with the adult at risk.
- Report bullying incidents to the CWO or a member of the committee.
- In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be referred to the BE LSO for advice. The individual should be made aware of this course of action.
- Where appropriate and with the adult’s consent Parents/Support workers should be informed and asked to attend a meeting to discuss the problem with the adult at risk present.
- Where appropriate and preferably with the adult at risk consent, police will be consulted.
- The bullying behaviour must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly.
- An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour.



If mediation fails and the bullying is seen to continue the club will initiate disciplinary action under the club constitution, or where appropriate under BE disciplinary procedures.



8. Responding to a disclosures, suspicions and allegations

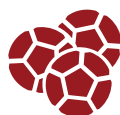
How to respond and actions to avoid

BE encourages environments which are engaging, respectful and which encourage feedback in order to raise awareness of issues. Although most cases of abuse can take place within the family setting, abuse can and does occur in boccia.

- It is essential that all allegations are taken seriously and appropriate action is taken.
- It is not your responsibility to decide if vulnerable adult abuse is taking place.
- It is your responsibility to report your concerns to the appropriate agencies.
- Not acting is not an option.

You may have concerns about abuse/poor practice because:

- You see it happening
- You recognise signs such as those listed in the section indicators of abuse
- Someone reports it to you
- A vulnerable adult approaches you directly.



How to Respond to a disclosure if you witness or become concerned about someone's behaviour, or someone tells you they or another person is being or has been abused you should:

Do's

1	Stay calm – do not rush so you don't frighten the individual, as this may lead to the withholding of information.
2	Always reassure the individual that he/she is not to blame that they were right to raise awareness of this issue.
3	Follow confidentiality procedures – this includes telling the individual that you may have to inform others to help stop the abuse. Confidentiality must be maintained but any concerns or information relating to possible abuse and risk to others must be shared on a need to know basis.
4	Ensure the safety of the individual – if urgent medical attention is required, then call an ambulance, inform the paramedics/doctor of concerns and ensure they are aware of the safeguarding/protection issue.
5	Take notes - completion of the incident report form. All concerns will be treated with a 'non-judgemental' and 'open mind' and be handled in a fair and equitable manner.
6	You – in order to ensure that your wellbeing is not hindered during a safeguarding issue please be aware that there are support mechanisms for you to access. If you think the situation is an emergency, contact your CWO or BE LSO.

Don'ts

1	No Rushing – into actions that may be inappropriate. Do not approach the alleged abuser and do not take actions that may compromise/destroy evidence.
2	Express your emotions and or make promises – the individual will need reassurance not an emotional response, blame or denial. Don't guarantee promises you cannot keep.
3	Take sole responsibility – ensure that you consult, refer and hand on appropriately.
4	Speculate or make assumptions – outcomes will be focused on evidence and fact. In addition do not assume that someone else is aware of the abuse and that they are taking action to stop the abuse
5	Interview the victim or probe them for detailed information as this could compromise future enquiries. Ascertain basic information in order to pass the concern on.



Recording information

Information that has been recorded may need to be passed onto partner/external agencies. Therefore, information must be as helpful as possible. Please remember, it is important to make a detailed report at the time of disclosure.

When recording information you should:

- Stick to the facts – what you have seen, heard or had reported to you.
- Distinguish between what is your personal knowledge and what you have been told by others.
- Do not give your own opinions: be clear when you are giving your own or others' interpretation of events and reason for this (for example if a comment was in response to a question or an unsolicited remark).

The report should contain the following details:

- Details of the individuals (alleged perpetrator and/victim). This should include name, address, date of birth, race, ethnic origin, and any disability that they may have.
- Information regarding the nature of the allegation.
- A concise description of any incident or injury.
- Any previous and current observation regarding any physical and behavioural state of the individual.
- Times, dates and venues.
- A concise account based on the own words of the individual if they have made a disclosure.
- Information about any action taken by you or others.
- Details of the person recording the information (name, role, contact details) and date of the disclosure.
- Copies for future reference.
- Keep a record of any third party correspondence or contact e.g. police officer, social services etc.

You are recording this information for:

- Yourself, so you have a record of what happened.
- The CWO or other designated welfare person within your club, who will co-ordinate any action that needs to be taken.



- The BE LSO so that they can advise you.
- The Police/Adult Social Care Services if appropriate.

Information sharing

One of the key principles embedding best practice in relation to safeguarding is ensuring that information relating to concerns is shared with/or between relevant bodies in order to protect potentially vulnerable children and young people.

Guidance from the Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) and from the (then) Department for Children, Families and Schools (DfE) makes reference to the seven golden rules of information sharing.

These are as follows:

- 1. Data protection is not a barrier to sharing information – but provides a framework to ensure information is shared appropriately.*
- 2. Be open and honest – with the person from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared.*
- 3. Seek advice – if you are in any doubt, without disclosing the identity of the person where possible.*
- 4. Share with consent where appropriate – and, where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information.*
- 5. Consider safety and well-being – base your information sharing decision on considerations of the safety and well-being of the person and others whom may be affected by their actions.*
- 6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure – ensure information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those who need to have it, is accurate and is shared securely.*
- 7. Keep a record – of your decision and the reasons for it.*



Reporting the concern

The discovery that someone you know may be abusing an adult at risk will raise feelings and concerns at your club. Although it can be difficult to report such matters, you must remember that:

- The welfare of the vulnerable adult is paramount.
- Being vigilant helps to protect the individual.
- Do not undertake to keep any disclosure of abuse confidential. It is important to explain to the vulnerable person before a disclosure that you may have to discuss the information they give with a person in a more responsible position than yourself.
- Regarding the concern, It is important that the individual is able to exercise their right to self-determination unless in exceptional circumstances, the level of abuse is very serious and/or clearly necessitates criminal investigation, then you will need to refer to adult social care.
- Do not pressurise the adult at risk as this can contribute to their stress. Try to negotiate an amicable agreement with the Individual about sharing your concerns and be honest about who must be told and what may then happen. Ensure the adult at risk is in control of their information and seek to encourage the individual to report the abuse themselves.
- A good reporting structure ensures that concerns are dealt with fairly.

Procedures to be followed

It can be very difficult to hear suspicions or allegations but it is important that concerns are acted on.

It is not for you to decide if abuse has taken place but to report the concerns. Ideally use the reporting form 'Safeguarding incident form' found on the BE website, if an incident referral form is completed as this sets out the sort of information which is useful. You should be careful to report as much detail as possible but avoid hearsay or assumptions. The alleged perpetrator will need to be informed of the specific allegation to give them the opportunity to respond, but only after advice from statutory agencies.

The BE CMT involved will decide if it is appropriate and/or possible to protect the identity of the complainant, although it should be noted that in some cases this may be apparent



or necessary. If a complainant is particularly concerned about their name being disclosed this should be discussed when making the referral. Where possible, those who have provided information will be informed about the progress and conclusion of the investigation.



Dealing with concerns, disclosure or allegations (flow chart)

Concerns identified.



Whistle blower identifies a concern.

If the adult at risk person requires immediate medical attention call an ambulance (999 or 112) and inform the doctor there is a safeguarding concern.



Report incident / concerns to Club Welfare Officer (CWO) or the relevant designated person who will:

- Complete the Boccia England (BE) Incident referral form.
- Report to the BE Lead Safeguarding Officer (LSO) with urgent/serious concerns (0115 9678455).
- Where urgent concerns (BE LSO unavailable) refer immediately to Social Services / Police and copy Report Form to both them and the BE LSO within 24 hours.



BE LSO conducts initial assessment



BE Case Management Team (CMT) decides on 'route' case should take services referral.



No case to answer.

Alleged minor poor practice.

Alleged serious poor practice or possible abuse.

Poor practice outcomes include:

- Referred to club with advice on process to be followed.
- Sanctions as outlined below via CMT or disciplinary panel.
- Referral to another BE department or another organisation.
- More significant concerns emerge.
- Complaint resolved with agreement between parties.

Serious poor practice / abuse

Possible Processes:

- Safeguarding investigation.
- Criminal investigation / proceedings.
- Investigation under disciplinary proceedings – including possible temporary suspension of person accused.
- Referral to the statutory services.
- Information gathered from involved parties.
- BE investigation pending outcome of Social Services / Police investigation.



Possible Outcomes (not an exhaustive list):

- No case to answer / no further action.
- Disciplinary sanctions including but not limited to: warning as to future conduct, a fine, temporary / permanent suspension.
- Training / mentoring.
- Conditions placed on continued involvement in boccia.
- Information shared/referred to others.
- Statutory services investigation/criminal prosecution.

Appeal



Circumstances where reporting to the CWO is not possible

If the CWO is unavailable or is implicated, talk directly to a senior club officer or go directly to BE LSO for advice.

If concerns arise in a setting where there is no CWO, inform the member of staff with responsibility for safeguarding adults at risk. Always ensure, in these circumstances, that BE LSO is informed of the referral. When with players are away from home, inform the person who has responsibility for welfare. This may be the head coach or team leader.

Involving parents and/or support workers

Where it is considered that a support worker may be the perpetrator of (responsible for) the abuse or is colluding with it, or may not be able to respond to the situation appropriately they should not be involved, as it may place the vulnerable individual at greater risk.

BE is committed to working in partnership with parents and/or support workers where appropriate. In most situations, it is important that the CWO or CPO involve support workers to clarify any initial concerns e.g. if an adult at risk seems withdrawn, it may be that they have experienced a recent bereavement. Consulting support workers or parents must be considered in light of the adult at risks right to confidentiality (Mental Capacity Act 2005) and ideally should be undertaken with the full consent of the vulnerable individual. Where there is doubt as to the vulnerable individual's capacity to make decisions then advice must be sought from the CPO.

Involving Boccia England

The BE LSO must be informed of all allegations of abuse and persistent poor practice as soon as possible in order to decide the following:

- What further action should be taken by the club or BE.
- Whether the adult at risk should consider taking further action or advice.
- Whether further action, advice or investigation is needed by/from the Police or Adult Social Care.

Passing on this information is important because the matter may be just one of a series of other instances which together cause concern.



Involving statutory agencies

It should be noted that physical and sexual abuse is illegal. Consequently there is an obligation that allegations and concerns are reported to the Local authority/ police who will decide whether to take action or not. In some instances, other types of abuse such as discrimination and financial exploitation may also be considered to be criminal and these should also be reported.

In any case of physical or sexual abuse or where safety is at risk, the adult at risk must be encouraged to contact one of the following statutory agencies:

their local police station or in an emergency, dial 999. The police should be involved if the abuse is thought to be of a criminal nature. A record should be made of the details of the referral and the crime reference number.

Adult Social Care (formerly Social Services). This body has a statutory duty to ensure the welfare of adults.

In an emergency, Social Care contact details can be found on your area's County Council website or from the Samaritans (08457 909090) who will hold the Duty Officer's contact number.

All telephone referrals made to the statutory agencies must be confirmed in writing within 24 hours detailing the following information:

- The name and title of the member of staff to whom the concerns were passed and the date this happened.
- Any action that has been taken.
- A summary of the information shared and the response received.
- The time and date of the referral call to the statutory agency.

Action to take regarding allegations outside of a boccia setting

If an adult at risk informs you directly that he/she is being abused or describes abusive behaviour outside of a boccia setting (i.e. at home or some other setting outside of boccia) OR through your own observations or through a third party you become aware of possible abuse outside the boccia environment you must **REACT IMMEDIATELY**.

Ensure the safety of the individual - if they need immediate medical treatment, take them to hospital or call an ambulance, inform doctors of concerns and ensure they are aware it is a safeguarding issue;



If possible, contact the Club Welfare Officer or BE LSO immediately who will follow the reporting procedures detailed below.

Suspension

If a case is judged to be potentially serious poor practice or abuse, the CMT may decide to take the neutral act of temporarily suspending the individual pending further investigations. Following a Social Care or Police investigation BE will assess the available information to decide whether the individual can be reinstated to their role in boccia. This may be a difficult decision; particularly where there is insufficient evidence for the Police to act or obtain a conviction. In such cases, the CMT or Sports Conduct Panel (SCP) must reach a decision based upon the available information which could suggest that on a balance of probability; it is more likely than not that the person poses a risk. The CMT may decide that an individual should undertake certain actions such as further training or completing a new DBS disclosure, with failure to comply resulting in suspension.

Appeals

The appeals procedure is available to anyone under investigation as part of natural justice. Anyone wishing to appeal against decisions by the BE CMT or SCP must do so in writing, to be received by BE within the specified period (usually 14 days unless stated differently) of the original decision being made.

Monitoring and evaluation

To be conducted at the close of the case to see if changes need to be made to policies/ procedures or lessons can be learnt. All involved in a case are able to offer feedback so procedures can be continually improved.

Support to deal with the aftermath

Consideration should be given about what support may be appropriate to the adult at risk and others effected such as parents and members of staff. Use of helplines, support groups and meetings will maintain an open culture and help the healing process. Thought should be given about what support may be appropriate to the alleged perpetrator of the abuse. See the list of partners and useful contacts for expert organisations.



Codes of Conduct

This policy should be read in conjunction with the various codes of conduct issued by BE. The codes of conduct are useful for everyone concerned with boccia to outline the expected behaviour of different groups. There are a number of different codes of conduct and many clubs will already have adopted and adapted their own.

BE has published a comprehensive code of conduct document that contains ideas for model codes. It may also be useful to consider developing specific codes of conduct for parents and support workers, athletes and other members and you may wish to consider consulting participants who are considered to come within the adults at risk category and their support workers on other areas they might wish to include.

The BE codes are available from the website at www.bocciaengland.org.uk

Managing the Policy

The BE Lead Safeguarding Officer (LSO) will oversee the implementation of these procedures. It is the LSO's responsibility to check that:

- BE procedures continue to reflect the current recommendations of external agencies that specialise in adults at risk protection.
- The procedures are disseminated and applied by BE members, volunteers, Clubs and staff.
- BE will review its Safeguarding and Protecting Adults at Risk Policy on an annual basis and in the following circumstances:
 - Changes in legislation and/or government guidance.
 - Following the introduction of any new internal or external safeguarding process, including the Vetting and Barring Scheme.
 - As a result of any significant Adult at Risk protection case within boccia or other sports.



9. Partners and useful contacts

Boccia England

8 Heathcoat Building
Nottingham Science Park
University Boulevard
Nottingham NG7 2QJ
Website: www.bocciaengland.org.uk
Tel: 0115 967 8455

The NSPCC

National Centre, 42 Curtain Road, London, EC2A 3NH
Website: <http://www.nspcc.org.uk>
Tel: 020 7825 2500, free phone 24 hour helpline: 0808 800 5000 –
Text Phone: 0800 056 0566

- Gujarati: 0800 096 7714
- Hindi: 0800 096 7716
- Bengali/Sylehti 0800 096 7715
- Punjabi 0800 096 7717
- Urdu 0800 096 7718

ChildLine

Freepost 1111, London, N1 0BR
Website: www.childline.org.uk
Tel: 0800 1111

Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU)

NSPCC National Training Centre, 3 Gilmour Close, Beaumont Leys, Leicester, LE4 1EZ
Website: <http://www.thecpsu.org.uk>
Email: cpsu@nspcc.org.uk
Tel: 0116 234 7278

Sports coach UK

114 Cardigan Road, Headingley, Leeds, LS6 3BJ
Tel: 0113 274 4802

English Federation of Disability Sport

English Federation Of Disability Sport, SportPark- Loughborough University, 3 Oakwood Drive, Loughborough, Leicestershire LE11 3QF
Tel 01509 227750
Fax 01509 22777



Sport and Recreation Alliance

Brunwood House
14 Caxton Street
London
SW1 H0QT
Tel: 0207973900

Disclosure and Barring Service

Website : www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check
Tel: 01325 953795

Local Citizens Advice Bureau

Website: www.nacab.org.uk

Aftermath

PO Box 414, Sheffield, S4 7RT
Website: www.aftermathuk.org.uk
Tel: 0114 275 8520

Local Authorities (Social Services)

Website: www.direct.gov.uk/en/HI1/Help/Socialservices/index.htm

Mencap

123 Golden Lane, London, EC1Y 0RT
Tel: 020 7454 0454

Mend

Website: www.mind.org.uk
Tel: 0845 766 0163

Sport England

Victoria House, Bloomsbury Place, London, WC1B
Website: www.sportengland.org
Tel: 0845 850 8508



Ann Craft Trust

Centre for Social Work

University of Nottingham

University Park Nottingham

NG7 2RD

Website: www.anncrafttrust.org

Tel: 0115 951 5400

Careline

Oregon House

19 Queensway

New Milton

Hampshire

BH25 5N

Website: <http://www.carelineuk.com/>

Tel: 0845 434 5440

Aftermath

PO Box 414, Sheffield, S4 7RT

Website: www.aftermathuk.org.uk

Tel: 0114 275 8520

