



SAFEGUARDING POLICY & PROCEDURES

Updated December 2022

www.basketballni.com

Policy Statement

Safeguarding: This policy document extends beyond what is traditionally associated with child protection and reflects a broader responsibility for health, safety and prevention as well as protection from abuse. **Safeguarding is about being proactive** and putting measures in place in advance of any contact with children to ensure safety. This may include:

- Ensuring volunteers are properly checked when they are recruited
- Guidelines for people who come into contact with children as part of their role to ensure they know what they need to do to keep children safe
- Guidelines for planning an event or activity with children, putting measures in place to minimise risk of safeguarding issues occurring

Policy statement/aims

Basketball Northern Ireland (BNI) is committed to the safeguarding and well-being of its members. BNI has a duty of care to safeguard all children involved in BNI from harm. All children have a right to protection, and the needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be considered. BNI will ensure the safety and protection of all children involved in BNI through adherence to the Basketball Ireland Code of Ethics and BNI Safeguarding Policies and Procedures and other associated policies.

A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989).

Scope

The policy is applicable to all staff, volunteers, committee members, coaches, consultants and BNI members. It is aligned to national legislation and guidance.

Further advice, guidance, support, and updates related to safeguarding is available from the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit and Basketball NI website:

www.thecpsu.org.uk

www.basketballni.com

Policy aims

The aim of the BNI Safeguarding Policy to promote good practice by:

- Providing children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of BNI.
- Allowing all staff/volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific safeguarding issues.

We at BNI are committed to good practice which protects children from harm. Staff and volunteers must accept and recognise their responsibility to provide an environment which always promotes the safety of the child. To achieve this BNI strongly advises all Clubs to;

- Develop an awareness of the issues which may lead to children being harmed.
- Create an open environment by identifying a 'Designated person' to whom the children can turn to if they need to talk.
- Adopt child centred and democratic coaching styles.
- Adopt child protection guidelines through codes of conduct for members and all adults working at the club. Adult workers include coaches, parents and volunteers.
- Ensure careful open and equitable recruitment, selection and management procedures. These procedures will provide regular support and supervision of staff/volunteers.
- Ensure complaints, grievance and disciplinary procedures are included in our constitution.
- Share information about concerns with children and parents and others who need to know.
- Provide information as required to the management committee.
- Ensure good and safe working/playing practices
- Be involved in training made available through the various agencies and strengthen links with these agencies.
- Keep child protection policies under regular review (every 3 years minimum).
- Have procedures relating specifically to bullying, away trips, transport and use of photography
- Have an induction document available for parents, coaches and children clearly outlining their rights and responsibilities

The **Children (Northern Ireland) Order (1995)** is based on a clear and consistent set of principles designed with the common aim of promoting the welfare of children.

Children have the right to be safe. All coaches/volunteers should ensure that this fundamental principle takes precedence over all other considerations.

Responsibility for the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy and associated procedures

SAFEGUARDING IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY: IGNORING A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN IS NOT AN OPTION

- BNI's Board and all associated committees have overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation.
- The BNI Board and Designated the Safeguarding Officer will be responsible for updating this policy and associated documents in line with legislative and Basketball Northern Ireland developments.
- All individuals associated with Basketball Northern Ireland will be expected to adhere to this Safeguarding policy as well as the associated Safe and Inclusive standards and Code of conduct

Reporting Procedures (relating to behaviour of member / volunteer of BNI)

These procedures are supported by a number of other BNI policies, codes of conduct and guidelines that are supplementary to this policy.

BNI accepts that organisations, which include young people among its members, are vulnerable to the occurrence of child abuse. Below are the procedures for dealing with any safeguarding issue that may arise. Safeguarding and the protection of young people is the concern of all adults at all times, irrespective of their role within the organisation. If there are grounds for concern about the safety or welfare of a young person you should react to the concern. Persons unsure about whether or not certain behaviours are abusive and therefore reportable should contact the duty social worker in the local Health Service Executive (HSE) where they will receive advice. Grounds for concern include a specific indication from a child, a statement from a person who witnessed abuse or an illness, injury or behaviour consistent with abuse. A report may be made by any member in the club but should be passed on to the Club Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) who may in turn have to pass the concern to the local Statutory Authorities. It is not the responsibility of anyone working within any affiliated group of BNI, in a paid or voluntary capacity, to take responsibility or decide whether or not child abuse is taking place. That is the job of the local statutory authorities. However, there is a responsibility to protect children by assisting the appropriate agencies so they can make enquiries and take any necessary action to protect the young person.

Recognition

Signs of abuse can be physical, behavioural or developmental. A cluster or pattern of signs is the most reliable indicator of abuse. It is important, however, to realise that all of these indicators can occur in other situations where abuse has not been a factor.

Example Indicators

Type	Physical	Behavioural
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unexplained bruising in soft tissue areas Bites, burns and scalds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Becoming withdrawn or aggressive Reluctance to change clothing
Emotional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drop in performance Crying 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regressive behaviour Excessive clinginess
Neglect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weight loss Untreated fractures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes in attendance Reluctance to go home
Sexual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Torn or bloodstained clothing Inappropriate sexual awareness behaviour or language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distrustful of adults Sudden drop in performance

Grounds for Concern

Consider the possibility of child abuse if there are reasonable grounds for concern. Reasonable grounds for concern exist when there is:

- a specific indication from a child that s/he has been abused
- an account by a person who saw the child being abused
- evidence, such as an injury or behaviour which is consistent with abuse and unlikely to be caused another way
- an injury or behaviour which is consistent both with abuse and with an innocent explanation but where there are corroborative indicators supporting the concern that it may be a case of abuse. An example of this would be a pattern of injuries, an implausible explanation, other indications of abuse, dysfunctional behaviour;
- consistent indication, over a period of time, that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect

Responding to a Child disclosing possible Abuse

- Deal with any allegation of abuse in a sensitive and competent way through listening to and facilitating the child to tell about the problem, rather than interviewing the child about details of what happened.
- Stay calm and avoid showing any extreme reaction to what the child is saying. Listen compassionately, and take what the child is saying seriously
- Understand that the child has decided to tell something very important and has taken a risk in doing so. The experience of telling should be as positive as possible so that the child will be less concerned about talking to those involved in the investigation
- Be honest with the child and tell them that it is not possible or appropriate to keep the information a secret - Make no judgmental statements against the person about whom the allegation is made
- Do not question the child unless the nature of what s/he is saying is unclear. Leading questions should be avoided. Open, non-specific questions should be used such as “Can you explain to me what you mean by that”
- Check out the concerns with the parents/guardians before making a report unless during so would endanger the child or compromise an investigation – if in doubt about telling the parents, consult with the statutory agencies first.
- Give the child some indication of what will happen next, such as informing parents/guardians, HSE. It should be kept in mind that the child may have been threatened and may feel vulnerable at this stage.
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- Carefully record the details (see appendix 3A for those in Northern Ireland and 3B for those in Republic of Ireland on BI web site or contact BI for hard copy).
- Pass on this information to the Designated Safeguarding Children Officer who will proceed as set out below.

Reporting Suspected or Disclosed Child Abuse

The following steps should be taken in reporting child abuse to the statutory authorities:

- Note dates, times, locations and context in which the incident occurred or suspicion was aroused, together with any other relevant information
- Report the matter as soon as possible to the club designated person or national designated person with responsibility for reporting abuse. If the Designated Person has reasonable grounds for believing that the child has been abused or is at risk of abuse, s/he will make a report to the health service executive/social services who have statutory responsibility to investigate and assess suspected or actual child abuse.
- If the DSO is unsure whether reasonable grounds for concern exist s/he can informally consult with the local HSC. S/he will be advised whether or not the matter requires a formal report.
- If it is a case of poor practice the DSCO will implement internal procedures to deal with the issue
- In cases of emergency, where a child appears to be at immediate and serious risk and the DSO is unable to contact a duty social worker, the police authorities should be contacted. Under no circumstances should a child be left in a dangerous situation pending intervention by the Statutory Authorities

- A DSO reporting suspected or actual child abuse to the Statutory Authorities will first inform the family of their intention to make such a report, unless doing so would endanger the child or undermine an investigation. If they are unsure they should consult informally with the Statutory Agencies before informing the parents. –
- The BNI Safeguarding Officer should be informed of: -
 - Any reports being made to Statutory Bodies. –
 - Name of any leader being asked to step aside and brief details of the case. –
 - Any case of poor practice which cannot adequately resolved at local level.

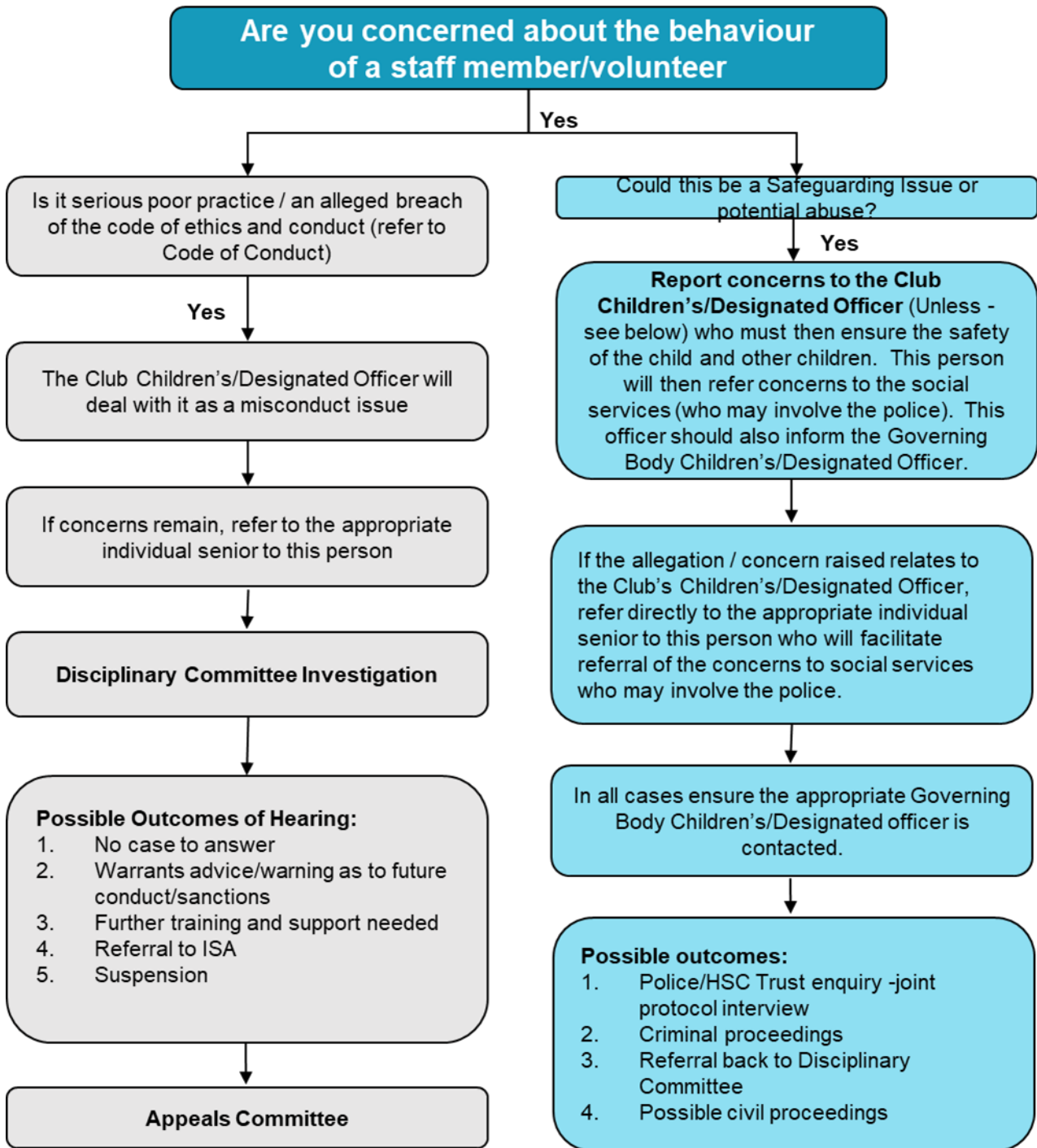
Confidentiality

Confidentiality should be maintained in respect of all issues and people involved in cases of abuse, welfare or poor practice. It is important that the rights of both the child and the person about whom the complaint has been made are protected.

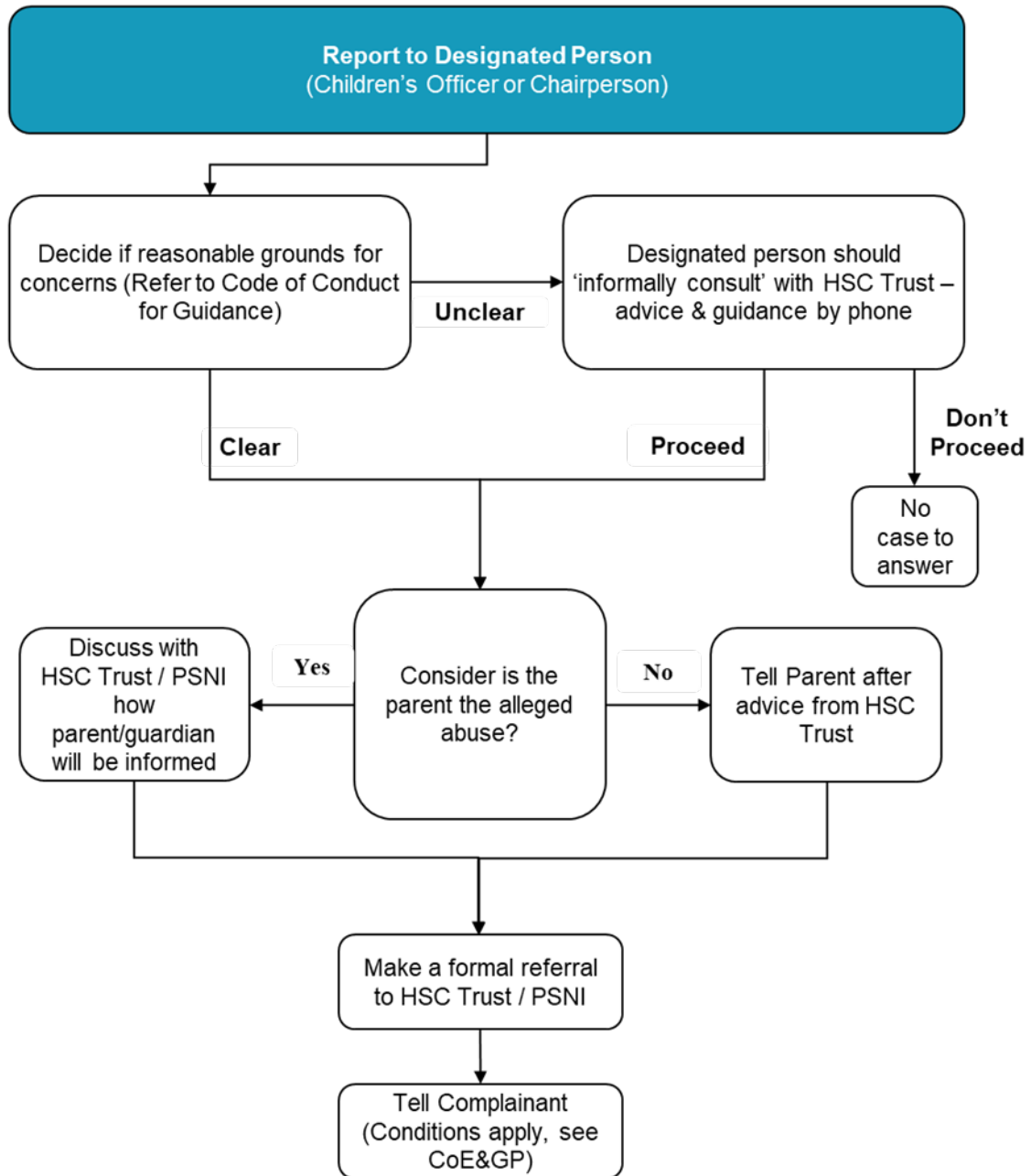
The following points should be kept in mind:

- A guarantee of confidentiality or undertakings regarding secrecy cannot be given, as the welfare of the child will supersede all other considerations –
- All information should be treated in a careful and sensitive manner and should be discussed only with those who need to know - Giving information to others on a 'need to know' basis for the protection of a child is not a breach of confidentiality –
- All persons involved in a child protection process (the child, his/her parents/guardians, the alleged offender, his/her family, Sports Leaders) should be afforded appropriate respect, fairness, support and confidentiality at all stages of the procedure. –
- Information should be stored in a secure place, with limited access only to designated people. –
- The requirements of the Data Protection laws should be adhered to. Breach of confidentiality is a serious manner.

Procedure for Internal Concerns: Issues that are related to behaviour of a staff member, Board member, coach, volunteer or any individual acting on behalf of BNI



Procedure for External Concerns: Where the issue may relate to issues in member clubs, youth clubs, facilities, or other organisations where basketball is taking place. When the complaint is about possible abuse outside the organisation:



Review of the Policy

Basketball Northern Ireland will review this Policy at least every 3 years or in line with revision of legislation and/or best practice; and formally agreed by the BNIU Board.