

Safeguarding Policy

World Sport Ministries (WSM) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people involved in its activities. WSM believes that children have the right to be completely secure from both the fear and reality of abuse. The protection of children in our care is the responsibility of everyone on all of our activities. Everyone working or volunteering with WSM, including activities under the project “GET Sported” has a responsibility to create safe environments, recognise concerns, respond promptly and report safeguarding concerns through the correct channels.

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children namely:

- Children Act 1989
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Special educational needs and disability (SEND) code of practice: 0 to 25 years; HM Government 2014
- Keeping Children safe in Education 2025
- Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers; HM Government 2018
- England: Working together to safeguard children: HM Government 2026
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018

This policy should be read alongside current statutory safeguarding guidance, including Working Together to Safeguard Children, local safeguarding partnership procedures, DBS requirements and WSM’s relevant internal procedures. WSM will keep this policy under regular review so that terminology, roles, reporting routes and contact details remain current.

Quick response: what to do if you have a safeguarding concern

1. If a child is in immediate danger or requires urgent medical attention, call the emergency services immediately.

2. If you have any safeguarding concern, report it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a Deputy DSL as soon as possible.
3. If the concern relates to the DSL, report it to the Deputy DSL or another senior leader immediately
4. Record the concern factually, including dates, times, locations, people involved, what was seen or heard, and any action taken.
5. Do not investigate the concern yourself, promise confidentiality, or delay reporting while seeking further evidence.
6. The DSL will decide, in line with statutory guidance and local procedures, whether to refer the matter to children's social care, the LADO, police or another appropriate agency.

1. Purpose and scope

This policy applies to all WSM staff, volunteers, leaders, trustees, contractors and anyone acting on behalf of WSM. This applies across all WSM activities, including those under the project "GET Sported", coached sessions, sports camps, projects, events, mentoring, online communication and any other setting where children or young people are involved.

The welfare of the child is paramount, as enshrined in the Children Act 1989. All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse. Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues. Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

2. WSM safeguarding commitments

- Recruit staff and volunteers safely, including appropriate references and up-to-date DBS checks before unsupervised work with children.
- Provide safeguarding information, induction, training, supervision and management support appropriate to each role.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand how to recognise, record and report safeguarding concerns.
- Share safeguarding information and good practice with children, parents, carers, staff and volunteers where appropriate.

- Respond to allegations or concerns promptly, sensitively and in line with statutory guidance, local safeguarding procedures and WSM policies.
- All staff are aware of their statutory requirements in respect of the disclosure or discovery of child abuse and the procedure for doing so. All staff and volunteers are instructed to report the disclosure or discovery of abuse to the Project Manager or the Safeguarding Lead.
- All staff and volunteers receive regular training and supervision in safeguarding issues and are provided with any relevant information and guidance.
- All staff must keep themselves up to date on safeguarding issues and procedures as and when updates are delivered.
- Maintain confidential safeguarding records that distinguish clearly between fact, observation and opinion.
- WSM will take appropriate action in relation to the findings of any investigation into allegations of abuse, consistent with its duties to protect the safety of children and uphold safe processes for staff and volunteers.
- WSM will share information about safeguarding and good practice with children, parents/ carers and staff
- Staff should be following best practice at all time and should not display inappropriate behaviour, which could be deemed as a safeguarding issue, see 'Safe Caring policy'.
- Review this policy regularly through an annual safeguarding audit and a mid-year review.

3. Safeguarding roles and responsibilities

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Edith Moses. The Deputy DSLs are Akeel Yousaf and Ella Gage. These officers must have suitable safeguarding experience, training and expertise and are responsible for coordinating WSM's response to safeguarding concerns, liaising with statutory agencies and ensuring safeguarding records are maintained securely.

All staff and volunteers must remain alert to signs of abuse or neglect, follow safe caring practice, report concerns promptly, cooperate with safeguarding procedures and maintain appropriate professional boundaries with children and young people.

Any staff member or volunteer subject to an allegation may be managed under WSM's disciplinary and grievance procedures, while safeguarding referrals and statutory processes are followed as required.

4. Safe caring practice

WSM expects all staff and volunteers to maintain professional, transparent and appropriate relationships with children and young people. Safe caring practice protects children and also protects staff and volunteers from situations that could be misinterpreted.

- Avoid one-to-one situations where possible. If unavoidable, keep the setting visible, leave doors open where appropriate and make another adult aware.
- Record any inappropriate physical contact, allegation or incident factually and promptly in the Incident Record Book or agreed safeguarding record.
- Do not carry out personal care tasks that a child can do independently. Where support is essential, another colleague should be present wherever possible.
- Be mindful of physical contact and avoid unnecessary or potentially inappropriate touch.
- All allegations made by a child against a member of staff will be fully recorded, including any actions taken, in the Incident Record Book. In event of there being a witness to an incident, they should sign the records to confirm this.

5. Definitions of abuse

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. A child may be harmed by someone inflicting harm or by someone failing to act to prevent harm. Abuse may happen in a family, community, institutional or online setting, and may be carried out by adults or by other children.

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*.

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 include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capacity, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious

bullying (including cyberbullying), 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.

Sexual abuse

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

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 a parent or carer failing to:

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

It may include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Organised abuse

Organised or multiple abuse involves one or more abusers and a number of related or non-related children or young people. It may involve individuals acting together, acting in isolation, or using an institutional framework or position of authority to recruit or abuse children.

Organised and multiple abuse occur both as part of a network of abuse across a family or community, and within institutions such as residential homes or schools.

(A child may suffer more than one category of abuse).

*Munchausen's Syndrome by proxy

The Oxford Textbook of Psychiatry defines Munchausen's Syndrome by proxy as: *"A form of child abuse in which the parents, or carers, give false accounts of symptoms in their children and may fake signs of illness (to draw attention to themselves). They seek repeated medical investigations and needless treatment for their children."*

6. Recognising possible abuse or neglect

The following signs may or may not indicate that abuse or neglect has taken place, but they should always be considered seriously and reported if there is concern. Staff and volunteers should not attempt to diagnose abuse or investigate concerns themselves.

Indicators of physical abuse

Physical observations

Any injuries with no explanation, or with conflicting explanations/inconsistent accounts

Injuries which occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc.

Injuries which have not received medical attention

Neglect – under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, inadequate care, etc.

Repeated urinary infections or unexplained tummy pains

Bruises: on trunk; on face, upper arm, shoulders and neck consistent with gripping; fingertip bruising/finger marks

Burns and scalds: cigarette burns; burns caused by lengthy exposure to heat

Human bite marks

Fractures, particularly spinal fractures

Swelling and lack of normal use of limbs

Cuts/scratches/substance abuse

Behavioural observations

Unusually fearful of adults

Unnaturally compliant to parents

Refusal to discuss injuries/fear of medical help

Withdrawal from physical contact

Aggression toward others

Wears cover-up clothing

Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming

Indicators of sexual abuse

Behavioural observations

Child with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or who regularly engages in age-inappropriate sexual play.

Hinting at sexual activity through words, play or drawing

Child who is sexually provocative/promiscuous or seductive with adults

Inexplicable decline in school performance

Sudden apparent changes in personality

Lack of concentration, restlessness, aimlessness

Socially withdrawn

Overly-compliant behaviour

Acting out, aggressive behaviour

Poor trust in significant adults

Regressive behaviour/onset of wetting (day or night)

Onset of insecure, clinging behaviour

Arriving early at school, leaving late, running away from home

Suicide attempts, self-mutilation, self-disgust

Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home

Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations

Eating disorders – anorexia, bulimia

Indicators of Emotional Abuse

Behavioural observations

Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clingy. Also, depression/aggression, extreme anxiety.

Physical, mental and emotional development delays

Acceptance of punishment which appears excessive

Over-reaction to mistakes

Continual self-depreciation

Fear of new situations

Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations

Neurotic behaviour (eg rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking)

Self-mutilation

Fear of parents being contacted

Drug/solvent abuse

Nervousness, frozen watchfulness

Obsessions or phobias

Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration

Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults

Attention-seeking behaviour

Persistent tiredness

Running away

Compulsive stealing/scavenging

Lying

Indicators of neglect

Physical observations

Poor personal hygiene

Poor state of clothing

Emaciation, pot belly, short stature

Poor skin tone and hair tone

Untreated medical problems

Behavioural observations

Constant hunger

Constant tiredness

Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school

Destructive tendencies

Low self-esteem

Neurotic behaviour

Poor social relationships

Running away

Compulsive stealing/scavenging

Multiple accidents and accidental injuries

7. Online safety and communication

WSM recognises that digital communication and social media can support positive engagement with young people, but they also create safeguarding risks. Communication with children and young people must be transparent, appropriate, accountable and in line with WSM expectations. Staff, volunteers, adult leaders and young leaders must use approved communication routes wherever possible. One-to-one private messaging should be avoided unless there is a clear safeguarding or operational reason, and another appropriate adult should be copied in or the communication should be recorded.

Any safeguarding concern arising through digital communication must be reported to the DSL or a Deputy DSL in the same way as any other safeguarding concern.

WSM will not be held responsible for anything that happens via social networking that breach our recommended guidelines of behaviour for those under 18 (and above 13) and for adults over 18 years.

Guidelines for under 18s and parents:

Social Media Networks have a minimum age restriction of thirteen. Parents should talk to their children about the reasons behind the age restriction as they are there for a reason. Accessing such sites too early can expose children to unnecessary bullying and inappropriate content. It is also very important to ensure children and young people feel comfortable about telling their parents things that have happened online. Talking to their children will help parents to understand the ways in

which they are using the internet, social media and their mobile phone. Talking to children about responsible behaviour is important as sometimes children who are victims of cyberbullying may also be involved in cyberbullying others. It's important to ensure they know they can go and talk to an adult or a parent if they are being bullied and need support. How parents talk to their children will depend on their age.

The following are some things that parents may wish to consider teaching their children about using the internet safely:

- Make sure you use the privacy settings.
- Always respect others – be careful what you say online.
- Be careful what pictures or videos you upload. Once a picture is shared online it cannot be taken back.
- Only add people you know and trust to friends/followers lists online. When talking to strangers, keep your personal information safe and location hidden.
- Treat your password like your toothbrush – keep it to yourself and change it regularly.
- Block the bully – learn how to block or report someone who is behaving badly.
- Do not retaliate or reply to offending e-mails, text messages or online conversations.
- Save the evidence. Always keep a copy of offending e-mails, text messages or a screen grab of online conversations and pass to a parent, a carer or a teacher.
- Most social media services and other sites have a button you can click on to report bullying. Doing this can prevent a bully from targeting you and others in the future. Many services take bullying seriously and will either warn the individual or eliminate his or her account.
- While you are on your mobile phone make sure you also pay attention to your surroundings.

For more information on protecting children on social media from cyber bullying visit:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/375420/Advice_for_Parents_on_Cyberbullying_131114.pdf

Sports Camps and other projects: Guidelines on communication for adult leaders and Young Leaders

WSM recognises the important role that social networking websites play in the ways in which young people communicate and the effectiveness of these groups within youth ministry, however, WSM also recognises the potential safeguarding issues social networking brings, therefore WSM recommendations of good practice include:

- All social networking sites have the potential to allow workers and young leaders to communicate on a one-to-one basis however we would strongly recommend that any one-to-one communication using a social networking site is kept in the public eye to safeguard both young people and workers.
- On Facebook, communication should be done using the wall function (i.e. posting on someone's wall) and it is recommended that this is used for communicating on a one-to-one basis on Facebook and for replying to private messages that young leaders may have sent to workers.
- In the case of group messages (messages sent to multiple young people perhaps for an event) it is advisable that another adult is also copied into this message and make sure these messages are logged and not removed.
- Try to use designated Facebook groups e.g. 'Youth Sport Leadership Development' or 'GET Sported' page to communicate with Young Leaders.
- In all communication with young people using social networking sites it is advisable to not use abbreviations (for example: lol) as these can often be misinterpreted by parents.
- Instant or private chat functions on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, WhatsApp or similar services should not be used for unrecorded one-to-one communication with children or young people.
- If a public wall post is not appropriate for responding to a young person then a worker should arrange a public meeting, phone the young person's parents or seek further advice from the Child Protection advocate depending on the level of information a young person has disclosed using a social networking site.
- It is recommended that staff should not be communicating with Young Leaders after 10pm in order to maintain a safe boundary between work and personal life.

For more information on the safety features on the social networking sites visit:

<http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-and-resources/parents-and-carers/safety-tools-on-online-services/social-networks>

8. Responding to allegations and disclosures

Allegations and safeguarding concerns

WSM will treat every safeguarding concern or allegation seriously, sensitively and promptly. WSM staff and volunteers must not carry out their own investigation into suspected child abuse. The DSL will coordinate internal recording and referral decisions and will seek advice or make referrals to statutory agencies where required.

- Where actual or suspected abuse comes to the attention of staff, they will report this to the DSL at the earliest possible opportunity. This includes any allegation about a staff member.

- Staff are encouraged and supported to trust their professional judgment and if they suspect abuse has, or is taking place, to report this.
- Full written factual records of all reported incidents will be produced and kept confidential, signed and dated. Accurate information recorded will include:
 - full details of the alleged incident;
 - details of all the parties involved;
 - any evidence or explanations offered by interested parties;
 - relevant dates, times and locations and any supporting information or evidence from members of staff.
 - WSM will demonstrate great care in distinguishing between fact and opinion when recording suspected incidents of child abuse.
- The DSL will be responsible for ensuring that written records are dated, signed and kept confidentially.
- If an allegation of abuse is made against the DSL, the deputy DSL will be informed as soon as possible. They will then assume responsibility for the situation or delegate this role to a senior member of staff. (see below for contact telephone number)

Where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer, WSM will take appropriate action to protect children and follow relevant safeguarding, employment and disciplinary procedures. Suspension or alternative duties may be considered where necessary and proportionate.

Where a person is dismissed or removed from regulated activity because they are unsuitable to work with children, WSM will make any required referral to the appropriate barring authority.

- Any children involved in alleged incidents will be comforted and reassured.
- Staff will ensure that any concerns/allegations are treated sensitively & confidentially.

Disclosures from children or young people

In circumstances where a child makes an allegation or a disclosure, the member of staff concerned will:

1. Listen fully to all the child has to say.
2. Make no observable judgement.
3. Ask open questions that encourage the child to speak in their own words.
4. Ensure the child is safe, comfortable and not left alone.
5. Make no promises that cannot be kept; such as promising not to tell anybody what they are being told.



Where possible, WSM will always respect the wishes of children and young people who do not consent to share confidential information. However, the lack of consent can be overridden if the facts of the case are in the public interest.

WSM will always consider the safety and welfare of a child or young person when making decisions to share information about them. Where there is concern that the child is suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm, the child's safety and welfare must be the overriding factor.

Staff and volunteers should be familiar with current safeguarding guidance and local safeguarding partnership procedures relevant to their role.

9. Referring concerns to child protection agencies

If there are reasonable grounds to believe that a child has been harmed, is at risk of harm, or is in immediate danger, the DSL or appropriate senior leader must act without delay. This may include contacting children's social care, the LADO, police or emergency services.

- Contact will be made, at the earliest possible opportunity, with the local social services department (see below)
- The DSL will communicate as much information about the allegation and related incidents as is consistent with advice given by social services and the police.
- At all times, the safety, protection and interests of children concerned will take precedence. The DSL and staff will work with and support parents/carers as far as they are legally able.
- WSM will assist the social services and the police, as far as it is able, during any investigation of abuse or neglect. This will include disclosing written and verbal information and evidence.

10. Key contact details

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Edith Moses – edith@worldsportministries.onmicrosoft.com

Deputy DSLs:

Akeel Yousaf - akeel@worldsportministries.onmicrosoft.com

Ella Gage - ellag@getsported.org

Allegations against staff

LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer): Victoria Harlin



Email: LADO@bathnes.gov.uk | Telephone: 01225 396810

Allegations or concerns of abuse

Bath and North East Somerset safeguarding children services

Children's Social Work Services:

01225 39 61 11 or 01225 47 79 29

Office hours: weekdays 8.30am–5pm, except Fridays when closed from 4.30pm

Emergency Duty Team (out of office hours):

01454 615165

Police assistance: 999

Date of next review: January 2027

11. Change record

Date of Change	Changed By	Comments
July 2027	ERG	Updated policy to combine both WSM and GET Sported. Updated Designated Safeguarding Lead to Edith, and updated contact details to correspond to this.
March 2026	GVT	Changed Deputy DSLs to include Ella Gage and remove Matthew Cullis.
Sept 2025	GVT	Changed Deputy DSLs to include Matthew Cullis and remove Byron Culf. Added Snapchat and TikTok to instant chat examples.
31/8/23	B.CULF	Changed DSL to Grant Sheppard