



# **GREAT BRITAIN DEAF FOOTBALL**

## **SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

VERSION 0.1 – FEBRUARY 2025

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1 Section 1 - Safeguarding ..... 3**
  - 1.1 Introduction..... 3
  - 1.2 Policy Statement ..... 3
  - 1.3 Monitoring and review the policy and procedures..... 4
- 2 Section 2 -Good and Poor Practice..... 5**
  - 2.1 Introduction..... 5
  - 2.2 Good Practice..... 5
  - 2.3 Poor Practice..... 6
  - 2.4 Relationship of Trust ..... 6
- 3 Section 3 - Raising awareness of potential vulnerability. .... 8**
  - 3.1 Introduction..... 8
  - 3.2 Children, young people, and adults with disabilities. .... 8
  - 3.3 Children, young people, and adults from minority ethnic groups. .... 8
  - 3.4 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)..... 8
  - 3.5 Forced Marriage..... 9
  - 3.6 Honour based violence (HBV). .... 9
  - 3.7 Supporting lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender children, young people, and adults. . 9
- 4 Section 4 - Defining Abuse ..... 11**
  - 4.1 Introduction..... 11
  - 4.2 Types of abuse ..... 11
    - 4.2.1 Physical Abuse ..... 11
    - 4.2.2 Sexual Abuse..... 11
    - 4.2.3 Emotional Abuse..... 12
    - 4.2.4 Neglect..... 12
    - 4.2.5 Bullying ..... 12
    - 4.2.6 Radicalisation..... 12
  - 4.3 Indicators of abuse ..... 13
  - 4.4 Signs of bullying include: ..... 13
  - 4.5 Use of photographic/filming equipment at sporting events ..... 14
- 5 Section 5 - Responding to Suspicions and Allegations ..... 15**
  - 5.1 Introduction..... 15
  - 5.2 Receiving evidence of possible abuse..... 15
  - 5.3 Recording information..... 15
  - 5.4 Reporting the concern ..... 16
  - 5.5 Concerns outside the immediate sporting environment (e.g., a parent or carer) ..... 17
  - 5.6 Confidentiality ..... 17
  - 5.7 Internal inquiries and suspension ..... 18
- 6 Section 6- Recruiting and Selecting Personnel whose remit includes working with Children. .... 19**
  - 6.1 Introduction..... 19
  - 6.2 6.2 Controlling access to children and young people..... 19
  - 6.3 Interview and induction ..... 19
  - 6.4 Training ..... 19
- 7 Declaration ..... 21**
- 8 Appendix i: Safeguarding Incident/Concern Form ..... 22**
- 9 Appendix ii: Sample Safeguarding Record Front Sheet..... 24**

# **1 SECTION 1 - SAFEGUARDING**

## **1.1 Introduction**

Everyone who participates in Great Britain Deaf Football (GBDF) is entitled to do so in an enjoyable and safe environment. GBDF has a moral and legal obligation to ensure that, when given responsibility for young people, staff and volunteers provide them with the highest possible standard of care.

GBDF is committed to devising and implementing policies so that everyone in sport accepts their responsibilities to safeguard everyone from harm and abuse. This means to follow procedures to protect everyone and report any concerns about their welfare and wellbeing to appropriate authorities.

The aim of the policy is to promote good practice, providing children, young people, and adults with appropriate safety/procedures whilst in care of GBDF and to allow staff and volunteers to make informed and confident response and decisions to specific safeguarding issues.

The following laws and guidance that GBDF seeks to protect everyone are as follows:

- Children Act 1989
- Data Protection Act 1988
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Special Education Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014.
- Care Act 2014

## **1.2 Policy Statement**

GBDF is committed to the following:

- The welfare of everyone is paramount.
- Everyone, whatever their age, culture, ability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity should be able to participate in Football in a fun and safe environment.
- Taking all reasonable steps to protect everyone from harm, discrimination, and degrading treatment and to respect their rights, wishes and feelings.
- All suspicions and allegations of poor practice or abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- All GBDF volunteers and staff who work with footballers will be recruited with regard to their suitability for that responsibility and will be provided with guidance and/or training in good practice in safeguarding.
- Where players are under the age of 18, working in partnership with parents and children is essential for the protection of children.

### **1.3 Monitoring and review the policy and procedures.**

The implementation of procedures should be regularly monitored and reviewed. The Welfare Officer should regularly report progress, challenges, difficulties, achievements gaps and areas where changes are required to the executive management committee.

The policy should be reviewed as when required whenever there is a major change in the organisation or in relevant legislation.

## **2 SECTION 2 -GOOD AND POOR PRACTICE**

### **2.1 Introduction**

To provide everyone with the best possible experience and opportunities in Football everyone must operate within an accepted ethical framework such as the *Player Code of Conduct* and the *Staff/Coaches Code of Conduct* which are GBDF documents that players, coaches and staff will be required to sign up to.

Child abuse is a very emotive and difficult subject. It is important to understand the feelings involved and not to allow them to interfere with our judgement about any actions to be taken. It is also important that abuse against children, young people and adults and the protection is openly discussed as this helps to create an environment where people are more aware of the issues and are sensitive to the needs of children. Open discussions also create environments that deter abusers.

It is not always easy to distinguish poor practice from abuse. It is therefore NOT the responsibility of volunteers/staff or participants in Football to make judgements about whether or not abuse is taking place. It is however their responsibility to identify poor practice and possible abuse and act if they have concerns about the welfare of the child, young people and adults,.

This section will help you identify what is meant by good practice and poor practice.

### **2.2 Good Practice**

All personnel should adhere to the following principles and action:

- Always work in an open environment (e.g., avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets).
- Make the experience of Football fun and enjoyable: promote fairness, confront, and deal with bullying.
- Treat everyone equally and with respect and dignity.
- Always put the welfare of everyone first, before winning.
- Maintain a safe and appropriate distance with players (e.g., it is not appropriate for staff or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a player or to share a room with them).
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with others. Where any form of manual/physical support is required, it should be provided openly and with the consent of the person. Physical contact can be appropriate so long as it is neither intrusive nor disturbing and the person's consent has been given.
- Involve parents/carers wherever possible, e.g., where young people need to be supervised in changing rooms, encourage parents to take responsibility for their own child. If groups have to be supervised in changing rooms always ensure parents, coaches etc. work in pairs.
- Request written parental consent if club officials are required to transport young people in their cars.
- Gain written parental consent for any significant travel arrangements e.g., overnight stays.
- Ensure that if mixed teams are taken away, they should always be accompanied by appropriate ratio of male and female member of staff (including parents/carers).
- Ensure that at away events adults should not enter a young person's/adult's room or invite young people/adult to their rooms.

- Be an excellent role model, this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of others.
- Always give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of others and do not risk sacrifice welfare in a desire for club or personal achievements. This means avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will.
- Secure written parental consent for the club to act in loco parentis, to give permission for the administration of emergency first aid or other medical treatment if the need arises.
- Keep a written record of any injury that occurs, along with details of any treatment given.

### **2.3 Poor Practice**

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

- Unnecessarily spending excessive amounts of time alone with other adults and young people away from others.
- Taking other adults/young people alone in a car on journeys, however short.
- Taking young people to your home where they will be alone with you.
- Sharing a room with a young person.
- Engaging in rough, physical, or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form.
- Allowing people to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Making sexually suggestive comments to anyone, even in fun.
- Reducing anyone to tears as a form of control.
- Allow allegations made by anyone to go unchallenged, unrecorded, or not acted upon.
- Do things of a personal nature that the people can do for themselves.

When a case arises where it is impractical/impossible to avoid certain situation e.g., transporting a young person in your car, the tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of the parent/carer and the young person involved.

If during your care you accidentally hurt anyone, the person seems distressed in any manner, appears to be sexually aroused by your actions and/or if the person misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done, report any such incidents as soon as possible to another colleague and make a written note of it. Parents should also be informed of the incident.

### **2.4 Relationship of Trust**

The power and influence an older player or a member of staff has over someone within the team cannot be underestimated. A member of staff/coach has significant power and influence over their players and therefore is in a relationship of trust, staff/coaches are therefore expected to act within appropriate boundaries with players, in relation to all forms of communication. Staff/coaches should be mindful of any physical contact with their players and should not have intimate or sexual relationships with their players. It is therefore important for staff/coaches/volunteers recognise the responsibility they have in ensure that they do not abuse the position of trust.

Genuine relationships do occur between different levels of staff/coaches/volunteers and with players within the team; however, no intimate relationship should begin whilst a member of staff/coach/volunteer is in the position of trust over them.

### **3 SECTION 3 - RAISING AWARENESS OF POTENTIAL VULNERABILITY.**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

Some children, young people and adults may experience multiple challenges and difficulties. This could be family circumstances; poverty; family problems with mental health, domestic violence or substance and alcohol use; discrimination, or disability. The more challenges children, young people and adults face the greater the vulnerability.

#### **3.2 Children, young people, and adults with disabilities.**

Research has consistently shown that those with disabilities are more at risk of abuse. Disability may be visible such as Cerebral Palsy or invisible such as learning difficulties. Many things contribute to this including:

- Poor practice result from not understanding the care and support the individual needs.
- Attitudes and assumptions about disability.
- Lack of awareness and the belief that disabled children are not abused.
- Factors linked to the impairment i.e., it may be harder to communicate or avoid the abuser if the individual depends on them.
- Targeting by abusers who may believe they are less likely to tell or be believed.

#### **3.3 Children, young people, and adults from minority ethnic groups.**

Children, young people, and adults from minority ethnic groups are also vulnerable because they may be:

- Experiencing racism and racist attitudes.
- Experiencing racism being ignored by people in authority.
- Afraid of further abuse if they challenge others.
- Subjected to myths, e.g., all people of a particular culture are good.
- Wanting to fit in and not make a fuss.
- Using or learning English as a second language.

There may be an increased possibility of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Forced Marriage or Honour Based Violence (HBV) reported. Please refer to 2.5.3, 2.5.4, 2.5.5 respectively for further advice.

“Child trafficking is about taking children out of their protective environment and preying on their vulnerability for the purpose of exploitation”. International Labour Organisation (ILO).

Although figures are an estimate, between 980,000 to 1,225,00 children both boys and girls, are in a forced labour situation as a result of trafficking internationally. Any concerns about the possibility of a child or young person being trafficked should be reported via the statutory agencies.

#### **3.4 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).**

FGM is a form of child abuse common to some African, Asian, and Middle Eastern communities in the UK. This is illegal and life-threatening initiation ritual can leave victims in agony and with physical and psychological problems. Carried out in secret and often without anaesthetic, it involves the partial or total removal of the external female genital organs.

GBDF should be mindful if a child or young person, their peer or relative expresses worries about a trip aboard.

The NSPCC FGM helpline offers specialist advice, information, and support to anyone concerned that a child's or young person's welfare is at risk because of FGM. If you are worried, contact the 24 hour helpline anonymously (any information that could protect a child or young person from abuse will be passed to police or social service) on 0800 028 3550 or email [fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk).

### **3.5 Forced Marriage.**

A forced marriage is where one or both people do not (or in cases of learning disability, cannot) consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used. In the UK it is recognised as a form of violence against men and women, domestic/child abuse, and a serious abuse of human rights.

The pressure put on people to marry against their will can be physical, including threats, actual physical violence, and sexual violence or emotional and psychological, e.g., when someone is made to feel like they are bringing shame to the family.

In 2012, of 1,300+ cases that The Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) dealt with, 40% of victims were under 18. If you are worried about a child or young person at risk of forced marriage, you can contact the FMU helpline on 020 7008 0151 or email [fmu@fco.gov.uk](mailto:fmu@fco.gov.uk). More information at [www.gov.uk/forced-marriage](http://www.gov.uk/forced-marriage).

### **3.6 Honour based violence (HBV).**

The term "Honour Based Violence" (HBV) is the international recognised term for describing cultural justifications for violence and abuse. It justifies the use of certain types of violence and abuse against men, women, and children.

'A crime or incidence, which has or may have been committed, to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community'. The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO).

HBV involves all cultures, nationalities, faith groups and communities in a national and international boundary. HBV is also a domestic abuse issue, a child abuse concern, and a crime.

### **3.7 Supporting lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender children, young people, and adults.**

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBTQ) children, young people and adults come from all socio-economic backgrounds, religions, faiths, ethnicities, and cultures. It is estimated that 6% of the population is lesbian, gay or bisexual. In addition, it is estimated by the Home Office that between 300,000 and 500,000 people in the UK may identify as transgender.

We all play a role in dispelling myths about LGBTQ people, challenging homophobia, and transphobia when they occur and creating an environment where everyone feels included. Every child, young person and adult has the right to be treated with dignity and respect, this includes those who are openly LGBTQ or thought to be.

To support LGBTQ create an environment that:

- Allows individuals to feel able to be themselves.
- Allows individuals to feel valued for who they are.
- Allows individuals to feel included and part of a community.
- Allows individuals to feel safe and supported.
- Allows individuals to feel they have people they can talk to if things aren't going so well.
- Doesn't make assumptions about who and what individuals are.
- Protects individuals from bullying.

Further information can be found at [www.stonewall.org.uk](http://www.stonewall.org.uk), or to speak with someone call 0800 050 2020.

## 4 SECTION 4 - DEFINING ABUSE

### 4.1 Introduction

Abuse is any form of physical, emotional, or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm, it commonly occurs within a relationship of trust or responsibility and is an abuse of power or a breach of trust. Abuse can happen to a person regardless of their age, gender, race, or ability.

Neglect and abuse can occur anywhere both within and outside of the family. This includes sport, leisure, cultural, religious and care environments and on transport to and from places. It can also occur online and through social media. Recent research has also indicated that abuse which takes place within a public setting is rarely a one-off event. Children, young people, and adults may be harmed or abused by professionals, volunteers, carers, family member and by other children. The issue is the effect on the child or young person; sometimes harm or abuse is intentional, sometimes the intent is unclear, something the harm is unintended.

There are six main types of abuse: **physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, neglect bullying, and radicalisation**. Any individual may abuse or neglect a person directly or may be responsible for abuse because they fail to prevent another person harming the person.

Abuse in all of its forms can affect a person at any age. The effects can be so damaging that if not treated may follow the individual all their lives.

People with disabilities may be at increased risk of abuse through various factors such as stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, isolation, and a powerlessness to protect themselves or adequately communicate that abuse had occurred.

### 4.2 Types of abuse

#### 4.2.1 Physical Abuse

This is where someone physically hurts or injures a person e.g., hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, biting, scalding, suffocating, drowning. Giving people alcohol or inappropriate drugs could also constitute abuse.

This category of abuse can also include when a parent/carer reports non-existent symptoms or illness deliberately causes ill health in a person they are looking after. This is called Munchausen's syndrome by proxy.

In a sports situation, physical abuse may occur when the nature and intensity of training disregard the capacity of the child's immature and growing body.

#### 4.2.2 Sexual Abuse

This occurs when adults (male and female) use other people/children to meet their own sexual needs. This could include full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse, and fondling. Showing young people pornography or talking to them in a sexually explicit manner are also forms of sexual abuse.

In sport, activities, which might involve physical contact with people, could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. Also, the power of the coach over athletes, if misused, may lead to abusive situations developing.

### **4.2.3 Emotional Abuse**

This is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a person, likely to cause severe and lasting adverse effects on the person's emotional development. It may involve telling a person they are useless, worthless, unloved, inadequate, or valued in terms of only meeting the needs of another person. It may feature expectations of people that are not appropriate to their age or development. It may cause a person to be frightened or in danger by being constantly shouted at, threatened, or taunted which may make the person frightened or withdrawn.

Ill-treatment of people, whatever form it takes, will always feature a degree of emotional abuse.

Emotional abuse in sport may occur when the person is constant criticised, given negative feedback, expected to perform at levels that are above their capability. Other forms of emotional abuse could take the form of name calling and bullying.

### **4.2.4 Neglect**

This occurs when an adult fails to meet the person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, to an extent that is likely to result in serious impairment of the person's health or development. For example, failing to provide adequate food, shelter, and clothing, failing to protect from physical harm or danger, or failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

Refusal to give love, affection and attention can also be a form of neglect.

Neglect in sport could occur when a coach does not keep the person safe or exposing them to undue cold/heat or unnecessary risk of injury.

### **4.2.5 Bullying**

This may come from another person. Bullying is defined as deliberate hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. There are four main types of bullying.

It may be physical (e.g., hitting, kicking, slapping), verbal (e.g., racist, or homophobic remarks, name calling, graffiti, threats, abusive text messages), emotional (e.g., tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating, ignoring, isolating from the group), or sexual (e.g., unwanted physical contact or abusive comments).

In sport bullying may arise when a parent or coach pushes the person too hard to succeed, or a rival athlete or official uses bullying behaviour.

GBDF have an Anti-Bullying Policy which can be provided on request.

### **4.2.6 Radicalisation**

This means someone is being encouraged to develop extreme views or beliefs in support of terrorist groups and activities. Radicalisation can happen both face to face or online. It is easier than ever to be groomed by terrorist recruiters on the internet and to find extremist materials.

Everyone is different and there is no checklist that can tell us if someone is being radicalised or being involved with terrorism. These common signs may mean someone is being radicalised:

- Expressing an obsessive anger sense of injustice about a situation and blaming this on others.
- Expressing anger or extreme views towards a particular group, such as a different race or religion.
- Suggesting that violent action is the only way to solve an issue.
- Sharing extreme views or hatred on social media.

### **4.3 Indicators of abuse**

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

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries.
- An injury for which an explanation seems inconsistent.
- The person describes what appears to be an abusive act involving them.
- Another person expresses concern about the welfare of another person.
- Unexplained changes in a person's behaviour e.g., becoming very upset, quiet, withdrawn, or displaying sudden outbursts of temper.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness.
- Engaging in sexually explicit behaviour.
- Distrust of other people, particularly those whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
- Difficulty in making friends.
- Being prevented from socialising with others.
- Displaying variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite.
- Losing weight for no apparent reason.
- Becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt.

### **4.4 Signs of bullying include:**

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

It must be recognised that the above list is not exhaustive, but also that the presence of one or more of the indications is not proof that abuse is taking place. It is **NOT** the responsibility of those working in GBDF to decide that abuse is occurring. It **IS** their responsibility to act on any concerns.

#### **4.5 Use of photographic/filming equipment at sporting events**

There is evidence that some people have used sporting events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of people. All clubs should be vigilant, and any concerns should be reported to the Team Managers.

All parents and players should be made aware when coaches use video equipment as a coaching aid. A Media Consent form will be provided to give agreement to this.

## 5 SECTION 5 - RESPONDING TO SUSPICIONS AND ALLEGATIONS

### 5.1 Introduction

It is not the responsibility of anyone working in GBDF in a paid or unpaid capacity to decide whether or not abuse has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities so that they can then make inquiries and take necessary action to protect the said person. This applies to **BOTH**; allegations/suspicious of abuse occurring within GBDF and to allegations/suspicious that abuse is taking place elsewhere.

This section explains how to respond to allegations/suspicious.

### 5.2 Receiving evidence of possible abuse

We may become aware of possible abuse in various ways. We may see it happening, we may suspect it happening because of signs such as those listed in section 3 of this document, it may be reported to us by someone else or directly by the person affected.

In the last of these cases, it is particularly important to respond appropriately. If a person says or indicates that they are being abused, you should:

- **Stay calm** so as not to frighten the person.
- **Reassure** them that they are not to blame and that it was right to tell.
- **Listen** to the person, showing that you are taking them seriously.
- **Keep questions to a minimum** so that there is a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said. The law is very strict and abuse cases have been dismissed where it is felt that the person has been led or words and ideas have been suggested during questioning. Only ask questions to clarify.
- **Inform** the person that you must inform other people about what they have told you. Tell the person this is to help stop the abuse continuing.
- **Safety of the person** is paramount. If the person needs urgent medical attention call an ambulance, inform the doctors of the concern, and ensure they are made aware that this is a safeguarding issue.
- **Record** all information.
- **Report** the incident to the Welfare Officer.

**In all cases if you are not sure what to do you can gain help from NSPCC helpline (24 hours a day, 365 days a year). Tel No: 0808 800 5000, Text: 88858, Email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk), Online: [www.nspcc.org.uk/reportconcern](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/reportconcern) or on SignVideo via the website.**

### 5.3 Recording information

To ensure that information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern. In recording you should confine yourself to the facts and distinguish what is your personal knowledge and what others have told you. Do not include your own opinions.

Information should include the following:

- The person's name, age, and date of birth.

- The person's home address and telephone number.
- Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their concern or someone else's.
- The nature of the allegation, including dates, times, location, and any other relevant information.
- A description of any visible bruising or injury, location, size etc, this can be reported on a body map. Also, any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes.
- Details of witnesses to the incidents.
- The person's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising/injuries occurred.
- Have the parents been contacted (where the person is under the age of 18)? If so, what has been said?
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record details.
- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record detail.

**N.B. Appendix 1 - Safeguarding Incident/Concern Form and Appendix 2 – Safeguarding Record Front Sheet are available to help with recording**

#### **5.4 Reporting the concern**

All suspicions and allegations **MUST** be reported appropriately. It is recognised that strong emotions can be aroused particularly in cases where sexual abuse is suspected or where there is misplaced loyalty to a colleague. It is important to understand these feelings but not allow them to interfere with your judgement about any action to take.

GBDF expects its members and staff to discuss any concerns they may have about the welfare of a person immediately with the person in charge and subsequently to check that appropriate action has been taken.

If the Welfare Officer is not available you should take responsibility and seek advice from the NSPCC helpline, the duty officer at your local social services department or the police. Telephone numbers can be found in your local directory.

Where there is a complaint against an employee or volunteer, there may be three types of investigation.

- **Criminal** in which case the police are immediately involved.
- **Child protection** in which case the social services (and possibly) the police will be involved.
- **Disciplinary or misconduct** in which case UKDS/GBDF will be involved.

All suspicions and allegations must be shared with professional agencies that are responsible for safeguarding.

Social services have a legal responsibility under The Children Act 1989 to investigate all child protection referrals by talking to the child and family (where appropriate) and Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, gathering information from other people who know the person/child and making inquiries jointly with the police.

**NB: If there is any doubt, you must report the incident: it may be just one of a series of other incidences which together cause concern.**

Any suspicion that a person has been abused by a volunteer/staff member should be reported to GDBF who will take appropriate steps to ensure the safety of the person in question and any other people who may be at risk. This will include the following:

- GDBF will refer the matter to required local social services department.
- The parent/carer of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social services department.
- The Chairperson of your organisation should be notified to decide who will deal with any media inquiries and implement any immediate disciplinary proceedings.
- The Welfare Officer should also notify the relevant sport governing body.
- If the Welfare Officer is the subject of the suspicion/allegation the report must be made to the appropriate manager who will refer the matter to social services.

Allegations of abuse are sometimes made sometime after the event. Where such allegation is made, you should follow the same procedures and have the matter reported to social services. This is because other people in the sport or outside it may be at risk from the alleged abuser. Anyone who has a previous conviction for offences related to abuse is automatically excluded from working with vulnerable people/children.

#### **5.5 Concerns outside the immediate sporting environment (e.g., a parent or carer)**

- Report your concerns to the Welfare Officer.
- If the Welfare Officer is not available, the person being told or discovering the abuse should contact their local social services department or the police immediately.
- Social Services and the Welfare Officer will decide how to inform the parents/carers.
- The Welfare Officer should also report the incident to the GBDF Governing Body. The Governing Body should ascertain whether the person/s involved in the incident play a role in the organisation and act accordingly.
- Maintain confidentiality on a need-to-know basis.

#### **5.6 Confidentiality**

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need-to-know basis only. This includes the following people:

- The Welfare Officer.
- The parents of the child.
- The person making the allegation.
- Social Services/police.
- National Governing Body if required.
- The alleged abuser (and parents if the alleged abuser is a child).

Seek social services advice on who should approach the alleged abuser.

All information should be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws.

## **5.7 Internal inquiries and suspension**

- The GBDF Welfare Officer will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and social services inquiries.
- Irrespective of the findings of the social services or police inquiries the GBDF Disciplinary Committee will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. This may be a difficult decision; especially where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases the GBDF Disciplinary Committee must reach a decision based upon the available information which could suggest that on the balance of probability, it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of the person should remain of paramount importance throughout.

## **6 SECTION 6- RECRUITING AND SELECTING PERSONNEL WHOSE REMIT INCLUDES WORKING WITH CHILDREN.**

### **6.1 Introduction**

It is important that all reasonable steps are taken to prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable people and children. This applies equally to staff and volunteers, both full and part time. To ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children the following steps should be taken when recruiting.

### **6.2 6.2 Controlling access to children and young people.**

- All staff and volunteers should complete an application form. The application form will elicit information about the applicants past and a self-disclosure about any criminal record.
- Consent should be obtained from the applicant to seek information from the Criminal Records Bureau.
- Two confidential references, including one regarding previous work with children should be obtained. These references **MUST** be taken up and confirmed through telephone contact.
- Evidence of identity (passport or driving licence with photo).

### **6.3 Interview and induction**

All staff and volunteers will be required to undertake an interview carried out to acceptable protocol and recommendations. All staff and volunteers should receive formal or informal induction during which:

- A check should be made that the application form has been completed in full, including sections on criminal records and self-disclosures.
- Their qualifications should be substantiated.
- The job requirements and responsibilities should be clarified.
- They should sign up to the organisation's Code of Conduct.
- Safeguarding Procedures are explained, and training needs identified e.g., basic child protection awareness.

### **6.4 Training**

In addition to pre-selection checks, the safeguarding process includes training after recruitment to help staff and volunteers to:

- Analyse their own practice against what is deemed good practice, and to ensure their practice is likely to protect them from false allegations.
- Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice and/or abuse.
- Respond to concerns expressed by a person.
- Work safely and effectively with all people.

GBDF requires:

- All staff and volunteers who have access to vulnerable people and children to undergo a DBS check.
- All staff, volunteers, coaches, welfare officers and team managers to undertake relevant training or undertake a form of home study, to ensure their practice is exemplary and to facilitate the development of positive culture towards good safeguarding practice.
- All staff and volunteers to receive advisory information outlining good/bad practice and informing them what to do if they have concerns about the behaviour towards anyone.
- All coaches, trainee coaches and leaders should be aware of FA safeguarding procedures and practices.

**7 DECLARATION**

On behalf of Great Britain Deaf Football, we, the undersigned, will oversee the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy and take all necessary steps to ensure it is adhered to.

**Signed:**

-----  
(n.b. One of the signatories should be the Welfare Officer)

**Name:**

**Name:**

-----  
**Position within GBDF:**

**Position within GBDF:**

-----  
**Date:**

**Date:**

-----  
Name of Designated Safeguarding Officer/ Welfare Officer:

8 APPENDIX I: SAFEGUARDING INCIDENT/CONCERN FORM

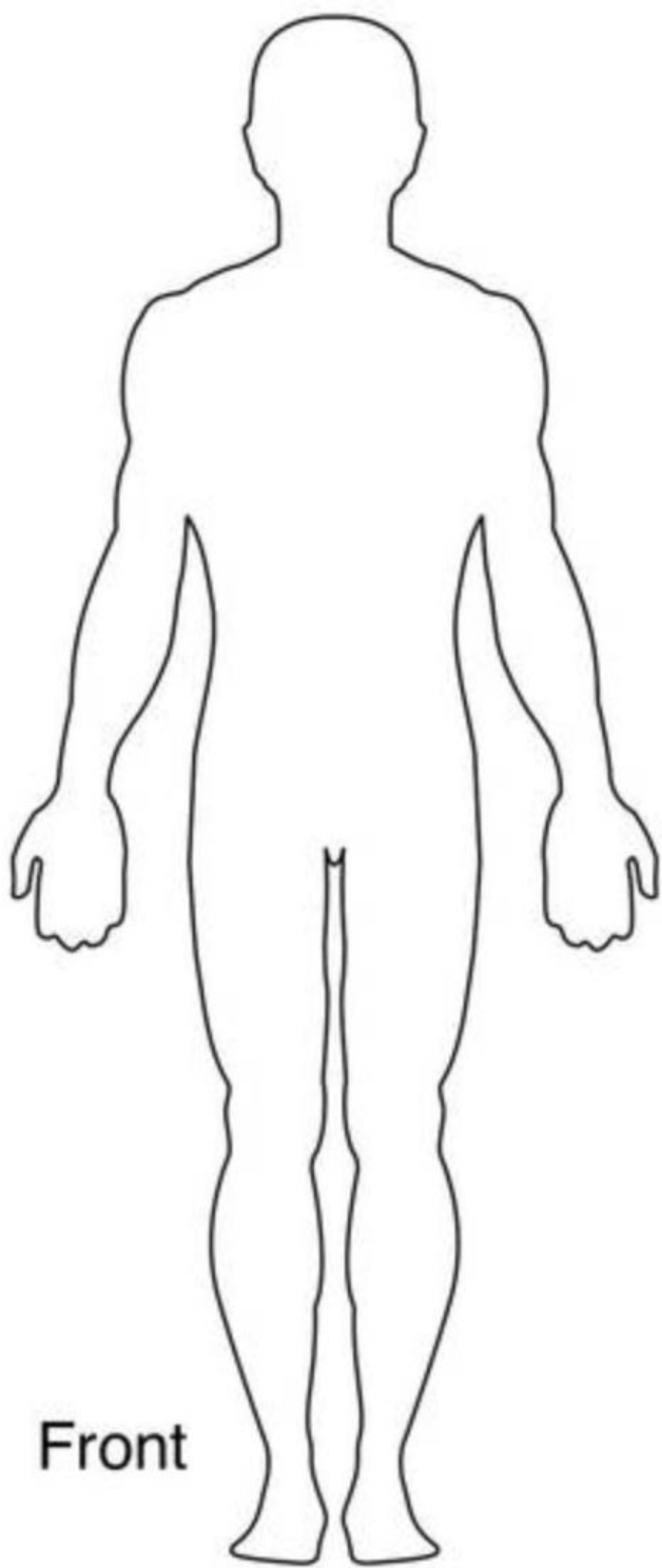


SAFEGUARDING INCIDENT/CONCERN FORM

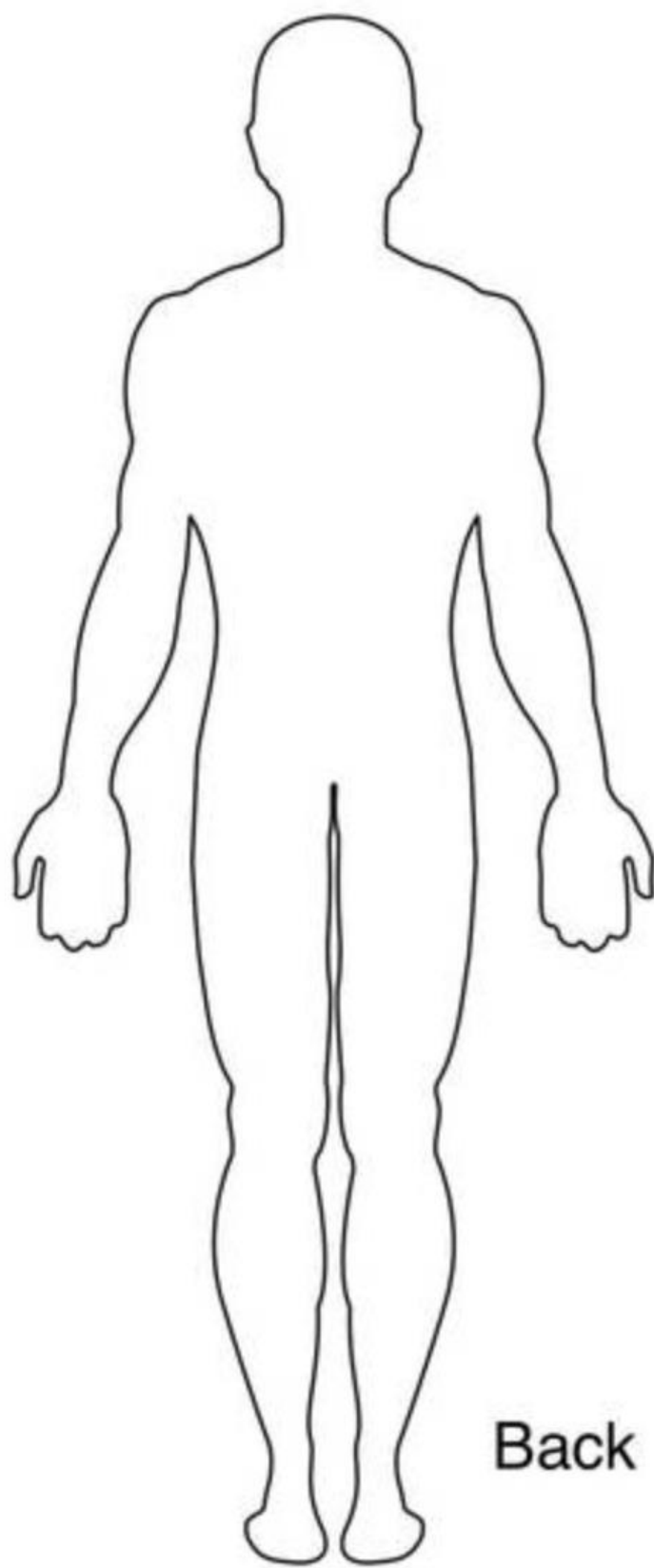
Person in Concern Name		Date of birth and Age	
Name and position of person completing form (please print)			
Date of incident /concern: (DD MM YY)		Time of incident /concern:	
Incident / concern (who what where when); body map on next page*			
Any other relevant information (witnesses, immediate action taken) *			
Signature: (name of person reporting)		Date form completed (DD MM YY):	
Role:			
Action taken (including reasons for decisions) and Outcomes* (NB – this section is only to be completed by Designated Safeguarding Officer/Welfare Officer)			
Signature of by Designated Safeguarding Officer/Welfare Officer		Date (DD MM YY)	

\*Continue on a separate sheet if necessary

Body Map



Front



Back

9 APPENDIX II: SAMPLE SAFEGUARDING RECORD FRONT SHEET



SAFEGUARDING RECORD FRONT SHEET

<b>Pupil/Child Name:</b>	<b>Date of Birth:</b>
<b>Any other name by which child is known:</b>	
<b>Home address:</b>	<b>Current address (if different)</b>
<b>Telephone no:</b>	