



Safeguarding Bowls

Policy

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Revision History

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2	Various updates	April 2015
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4	Updated and added references to ESMBA	September 2015
5	Changed text & added EBF	October 2015
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8	Reworded Club Safeguarding Officer to Safeguarding Officer	May 2018
9	Change in Legislation and general updates	May 2019

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Key abbreviations found in this document

BDA	Bowls Development Alliance
BCGBA	British Crown Green Bowls Association
BE	Bowls England
CMG	Case Management Group
CPSU	Child Protection in Sport Unit
CSC	Children's Social Care (formerly known as Social Services)
CSP	County Sports Partnership
DBS	Disclosure & Barring Service (formally known as CRB)
EBF	English Bowling Federation
EIBA	English Indoor Bowling Association Ltd
ESMBA	English Short Mat Bowling Association
LSCB	Local Safeguarding Children's Board
NGB	National Governing Body
NSPCC	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
SAB	Safeguarding Adults Board
SO	Safeguarding Officer



Safeguarding Bowls

Introduction

The Bowls Development Alliance is the umbrella organisation for the development of the sport of bowls, working with all the National Governing Bodies of bowls to ensure a safe environment for young people and adults at risk to enjoy playing bowls.

All partners are committed to ensuring that support is available to all clubs to assist them with ensuring policies are in place and resources are available to ensure that safe environment.

Other codes of bowls will be encouraged to follow the same processes and endorse these in all their clubs.

Everyone in bowls has a part to play in safeguarding young people and adults at risk. This policy includes guidelines for all those involved in the sport of bowls to ensure that everyone is aware of the structures and systems in place to make bowls an enjoyable and safe experience, and to respond to any concerns that may emerge.

The Children Acts 1989 and 2004 and **Working Together to Safeguard Children** (DOH 2018) highlight the shared responsibility of organisations to promote children's wellbeing and safeguard them from harm. This includes the entire bowls structure from clubs to National Governing Bodies.

The **Care Act (2014)** which sets out for the first time a legal framework for safeguarding adults.

- The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims (Amendment) Act 2012
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Data Protection Act 2018

It is not possible to eliminate all risks but it is important that those in bowls with a specific responsibility for junior players, adults at risk or members can demonstrate that they have assessed the risks and taken all steps to minimise them.

To fulfil their commitment to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults at risk, all organisations that provide services for, or work with, children and adults at risk must have:

- a clear line of accountability for the provision of services designed to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults at risk.
- a senior board level lead to take leadership responsibility for the organisation's safeguarding arrangements;
- a culture of listening to children and adults at risk and taking account of their wishes and feelings, both in individual decisions and the development of services;
- clear whistleblowing procedures which are suitably referenced in staff training and codes of conduct, and a culture that enables issues about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk to be addressed.
- clear information sharing arrangements which set out the processes for sharing information, with other professionals and with the Local Safeguarding Children Board's (LSCB);
- NGB Safeguarding Officer
- safe recruitment practices for individuals whom the organisation will permit to work regularly with children and adults at risk, including policies on when to obtain a criminal record check;
- appropriate supervision and support for staff, including undertaking safeguarding training;
- clear policies in line with those from the LSCB for dealing with allegations against people who work with children

Principles

A child's welfare is paramount (a child is defined as any young person under the age of 18 years). An adult at risk is a person aged 18 or over who 'is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation'

All young people and adults at risk regardless of age, disability, racial origin, religious belief, gender, sexual identity and social background have a right to enjoy sport free from all forms of abuse or poor practice.

The National Governing Bodies of Bowls, affiliated County Associations and bowls clubs have responsibilities for the welfare of children and adults at risk who take part in their sport.

Bowls Development Alliance

The Bowls Development Alliance (BDA), working together with the bowls National Governing Bodies (NGB's) have developed these guidelines on behalf of the sport of bowls. All of the NGB's have all adopted this policy and procedures.

Aim:

- to develop guidelines on safeguarding for the sport of bowls.
- ensure that bowls has clear and consistent safeguarding policies and procedures across all the National Governing Bodies of the sport.
- communicate these guidelines across the family of bowls.
- to ensure that these policies and procedures are reviewed after the first year of development and then every three years or whenever there is a major change in legislation applicable to any of the organisations within bowls.
- to ensure that all bowls organisations have clear roles and responsibilities within the process of safeguarding and child protection.

The National Governing Bodies of Bowls

Each National Governing Body must ensure that all children and adults at risk are protected and kept safe whilst participating in the sport of bowls.

They will:

- through the Bowls Development Alliance, provide guidance on child protection for parents, young people, adults at risk and all those participating in the sport.
- adopt good practice in the recruitment, training and supervision of staff, coaches and volunteers.
- advise County Associations and bowls clubs on best practice and recommend they adopt the safeguarding guidelines and adhere to appropriate codes of conduct.
- respond to allegations, concerns and complaints relating to child protection and welfare.
- implement and provide advice on how to manage the safeguarding process.

County Associations (*Where relevant*)

County Associations have direct responsibility for the welfare of children and adults at risk involved in bowls activities organised by the County with support from their National Governing Body. They should;

- Set an example by implementing effective county level procedures and promoting best practice.
- Seek to ensure effective protection and safeguarding of children and adults at risk by nominating a County Safeguarding Officer.
- Promote education and training across the county.
- Promote the use of the “Safeguarding Bowls” guidelines to develop best practice and communicate key basic procedures to all clubs in their county. Ensure the guidelines are available to download from the association’s website.
- Report any allegations or complaints in the County to the NGB Safeguarding Officer

Affiliated Clubs

All clubs must ensure they have welfare procedures in place. It is recognised that all clubs are different and guidelines need to be adapted to suit each case.

Care Act 2014 and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)¹ is based on the principles that:

- (1) safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility and for services to be effective each professional and organisation should play their full part.
- (2) a child-centred approach is vital and for services to be effective they should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of children. “

Clubs should:

- Carry out an overall risk assessment
- Adopt policies and procedures as appropriate
- Nominate a Club Safeguarding Officer
- Promote training opportunities to club members

The Club Safeguarding Officer is not required to make a judgement regarding an incident but to report it to the County Safeguarding Officer and/or NGB Safeguarding Officer (as appropriate).

¹ Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (March 2018)

Coaches

Coaches have a very important part to play in protecting children and adults at risk from potential harm and are often the first to recognise and raise concerns.

It is very important that all coaches read the “Safeguarding Bowls” Policy & Guidelines document and are aware of the process to follow, to deal with any concerns. They should also ensure that any coaches employed or deployed by them also have knowledge of and abide by these guidelines.

All coaches are advised to attend a Basic Safeguarding Course

Good Coaching practice

Joint guidance was produced by sports coach UK and the Child Protection in Sport Unit in 2010 outlining best practice guidelines for coaches coaching young people’s activities.

It stressed the need for clear ratios for appropriate staffing/supervision ratios of coaches to participants (generally 1:8). This will minimise any risks to participants and enhance the benefits they draw from the activity

Coaches should never be left alone with an individual or group and it is recommended that at least one adult present is the same gender as the bowler or group of bowlers.

The Coach should hold an appropriate qualification, comply with minimum age requirements, have relevant insurance cover, have completed a criminal records disclosure that is acceptable to the NGB (if they are coaching on a regular basis) and have signed up to the following policies:

- Code of conduct for coaches
- Equality Policy
- Safeguarding policy
- Health and Safety Policy

Safe recruitment

Ensuring that staff and volunteers recruited are safe to work with children and adults at risk includes several areas as outlined in the” Safe Recruitment Guidelines”, i.e. application process, interview, criminal records checks, references, induction process.

Criminal records checks form one part of this process. The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) merged to form the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in December 2012.

The DBS was established under the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 (‘The Act’) and carries out the functions previously undertaken by the CRB and ISA, and the CRB application form has been replaced with a new DBS application form.

Criminal records checks assist organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors to make safer recruitment decisions by identifying candidates who may be unsuitable for certain work, especially work that involves children or adults at Risk

Each NGB offers a criminal records checking service for all their affiliated members.

Implementation

- National Governing Bodies should send the Safeguarding in Bowls guidance to all County Associations
- County Associations (if relevant) should support clubs in developing and communicating this information.
- Clubs should complete the “Club Checklist” to help them identify areas of development within the club, with the support of the County and/or National Governing Body
- Clubs should communicate relevant information about the Safeguarding in Bowls policy and procedures to all their members.
- Clubs with junior members should appoint a Club Safeguarding Officer to lead on the development of safeguards within the club, respond to any concerns and ensure that their contact details are available to all members.

Training

It is important that anyone who is involved in Safeguarding should develop their awareness of the subject and it is recommended that they attend training relevant to their role.

- **Sports coach UK** – 3hr course (this course is available at a local level, organised by the local County Sport Partnership). Provides a basic understanding and awareness of safeguarding and is ideal for any member including coaches, volunteers and in particular Club Safeguarding Officers. Contact details for your nearest County Sport Partnership can be found on www.safeguardingbowls.org/training.html
- **Safeguarding in Bowls - “Time to Listen”** – 4hr course. This is a bowls-specific workshop designed to support Club Safeguarding Officers. The workshop uses easy to follow, practical, bowls-related examples and case studies to enable you to fully understand your role in the club, and how you can effectively safeguard young people and adults at risk in your care. The course has been developed by the Child Protection in Sport Unit of the NSPCC but is administered by the Coach Bowls Ltd For more information go to www.safeguardingbowls.org/training.html
- **Adults Safeguarding in Bowls** – 3hr course. This is primarily for Club Safeguarding Officers/Volunteers who have adult members only. For more information go to www.safeguardingbowls.org/training.html

Dealing with Concerns and Allegations

Introduction

It is not the responsibility of those working in bowls to make judgements as to whether or not abuse is occurring. It is however their responsibility to act on any concerns.

Adults within bowls have a duty of care to respond to inappropriate behaviour, abuse or bullying.

Not all concerns are about child or adults at risk relate to abuse – many relate to poor practice and can be dealt with internally, with the support of the National Governing Body if appropriate.

All information received and discussed must be treated in confidence and only shared with those individuals within the organisation with a designated safeguarding role.

On occasion, it may be necessary to seek advice or inform the statutory agencies e.g. Child/Adult Social Care or the Police.

Definition of Abuse (Children)

It is important to be aware of what constitutes abuse. The following definitions are adapted from Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)

- 1. Physical Abuse** - may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. This definition also applies where a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of or deliberately induces illness in a child.
- 2. Emotional Abuse** - 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, unloved or inadequate. 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 occur when the child is subjected to unrealistic pressure or is bullied in order to perform to high expectations.
- 3. Sexual Abuse** - involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual physical contact including assault by penetration (e.g. rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts (e.g. masturbation, kissing and touching outside of clothing) They may also include non-contact activities such as involving children looking at or in 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).
- 4. Neglect** - 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 (such as food, clothing or shelter).

5. Bullying - deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. Bullying can take many forms but there are three main types:

- **Physical** e.g. hitting, kicking, theft
- **Verbal** e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name calling
- **Emotional** e.g. isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of their peer group

There are a number of signs that may indicate that children are being abused:

- 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 the explanation seems inconsistent.
- the child describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her.
- someone else (a child or adult) expresses concern about the welfare of another child.
- unexplained changes in behavior (e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper).
- inappropriate sexual awareness.
- engaging in sexually explicit behavior.
- distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
- difficulty in making friends.
- being prevented from socializing with other children.
- displaying variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite.
- loss of weight for no apparent reason.
- the child becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt.

This list is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more of the indicators is not proof that abuse is actually taking place. Some changes in behavior can be caused by changes at home, for example, bereavement and parents are encouraged to inform the Club, Coach or Club Safeguarding Officer of any such circumstances.

It is important to be aware that some children are additionally vulnerable to abuse including disabled children, those from different cultures and high performing young people.

Definition of Abuse (Adults) from the Care Act 2014

1. **Self-neglect** – this covers a wide range of behaviour: neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding. In (insert name of your sport) this could be a player whose appearance becomes unkempt, does not wear suitable sports kit and deterioration in hygiene.
2. **Modern Slavery** – encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment. In (insert name of your sport) you may notice that a participant in a team has been missing from practice sessions and is not responding to reminders from team members or coaches.
3. **Domestic Abuse** – including psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional abuse. It also includes so called 'honour' based violence. Sport may notice a power imbalance between a participant and a family member. For example a participant with Downs syndrome may be looking quiet and withdrawn when their brother comes to collect them from sessions, in contrast to their personal assistant whom they greet with a smile.
4. **Discriminatory** – discrimination is abuse which centres on a difference or perceived difference particularly with respect to race, gender or disability or any of the protected characteristics of the Equality Act. This could be the harassing of a club member because they are or are perceived to be transgender
5. **Organisational Abuse** – including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation. In (insert name of your sport), this could be training without a necessary break.
6. **Physical Abuse** – includes hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanctions. This could be a coach intentionally striking an athlete.
7. **Sexual Abuse** – including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting. This could be a fellow athlete who sends unwanted sexually explicit text messages to a learning disabled adult they are training alongside.
8. **Financial or Material Abuse** – including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits. This could be someone taking equipment from an athlete with dementia.

9. **Neglect** – including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating. This could be a coach not ensuring athletes have access to water.
10. **Emotional or Psychological Abuse** – this includes threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks. This could be an athlete threatening another athlete with physical harm and persistently blaming them for poor performance.

Not included in the Care Act 2014 but also relevant:

Cyber Bullying - cyber bullying occurs when someone repeatedly makes fun of another person online or repeatedly picks on another person through emails or text messages, or uses online forums with the intention of harming, damaging, humiliating or isolating another person. It can be used to carry out many different types of bullying (such as racist bullying, homophobic bullying, or bullying related to special educational needs and disabilities) but instead of the perpetrator carrying out the bullying face-to-face, they use technology as a means to do it.

Forced Marriage - forced marriage is a term used to describe a marriage in which one or both of the parties are married without their consent or against their will. A forced marriage differs from an arranged marriage, in which both parties consent to the assistance of a third party in identifying a spouse. The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 make it a criminal offence to force someone to marry.

Mate Crime - a 'mate crime' as defined by the Safety Net Project is 'when vulnerable people are befriended by members of the community who go on to exploit and take advantage of them. It may not be an illegal act but still has a negative effect on the individual.'

Radicalisation - the aim of radicalisation is to attract people to their reasoning, inspire new recruits and embed their extreme views and persuade vulnerable individuals of the legitimacy of their cause. This may be direct through a relationship, or through social media.

Responding to concerns about a child

Abuse can and does occur in a variety of situations, which may include sport or other social activities. Most children are abused by someone known to them. This may be within or outside of the bowls context. Concerns may arise from a child or adult expressing concerns or by something observed that raise issues.

It is important that those involved in bowls are vigilant about concerns, and that all allegations are taken seriously and appropriate action taken.

There is a responsibility to inform appropriate agencies of possible abuse so that they can then make enquiries and take any action necessary to protect the child. This applies both to suspicions of abuse occurring within the context of bowling activities and to allegations that abuse is taking place elsewhere.

Examples of concerns that might arise are:

- a parent who pushes too hard.
- a coach who adopts a win-at-all costs philosophy.
- an older player who intimidates (inappropriately).
- an official who places unfair pressure on a person.
- changes in a child's behaviour linked to concerns about home.

If there is cause for concern you need to;

- stay calm.
- keep an open mind.
- listen very carefully to what is being said and take the child seriously.
- as soon as possible record in writing what was said using the child's own words.
- explain who needs to know.
- keep questions to a minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said.
- reassure the child that they have done the right thing telling you.
- report the issue in line with procedures.

All concerns about a child must be taken seriously, investigated appropriately and treated confidentially.

It is not the responsibility of the Bowls Club Safeguarding Officer or anyone working in bowls to decide if a child has been abused. It is however their responsibility to act upon any concern and refer to the County Safeguarding Officer and/or NGB Safeguarding Officer (as appropriate).

The NSPCC Helpline (0800 800 5000) can be contacted to talk through any concerns that arise. This can be done anonymously.

If action needs to be taken urgently, contact the Police by dialling 999. If concerns are identified out of hours the Police and CSC provide an out of hours' service.

When concerns are reported to the statutory authorities they will investigate to establish whether a child is at risk of "significant harm". If a criminal offence is suspected the CSC will always work in partnership with the police. Their primary duty is to safeguard and ensure the welfare of the child and to work within LSCB procedures.

If concerns relate to an individual within bowls, the following will apply:

- The relevant disciplinary procedures will be implemented following the advice of the statutory authorities if they are involved.
- The individual may be asked to stop working with the child (children) immediately whilst a full investigation is carried out. This is to protect all parties involved.
- Alongside the disciplinary procedures, and informed by any statutory enquiries, the National Governing Body Case Management Group will assess whether it is appropriate for the person to return to work with children and how this will be managed.

- The National Governing Body Case Management Group will assess on a case by case basis any support needed for the person about whom the allegations have been made.
- An independent person may be appointed to give this support.

There are appropriate procedures to manage reported concerns or allegations which have been complied in accordance with Government guidelines and legislation.

To retain bowls integrity it is important that all organisations apply the same procedures.

Responding to concerns about an Adult at Risk

You may become aware that abuse or poor practice is taking place, suspect abuse or poor practice may be occurring or be told about something that may be abuse or poor practice and you must report this to the Club Safeguarding Officer.

If you are concerned someone is in immediate danger, contact the police straight away.

It is important when considering your concern that you also consider the needs and wishes of the person at risk, taking into account the nature of the alert.

Step by Step Guide

Reporting and Managing concerns within the sport of Bowls

If concerns are raised about possible abuse or poor practice within bowls the process would be as follows:

- The Club Safeguarding Officer should be notified.
- The Club Safeguarding Officer must notify either the County Safeguarding Officer or NGB Safeguarding Officer (as appropriate) using the template form provided (Template 17)
- The County Safeguarding Officer or NGB Safeguarding Officer (as appropriate) will report any concerns about abuse to the statutory authorities
- The NGB Safeguarding Officer will notify the National Governing Body Case Management Group as required.
- The NGB Safeguarding Officer will report concerns to the Local Authority Designated Officer if they relate to a person in a position of trust, for example a coach.
- Advice from CSC and/or Police should direct the timing of any investigation which may be being considered under the NGB Disciplinary Procedures.

If the Club or County Safeguarding Officer or the NGB Safeguarding Officer is not available there must be no delay. Advice should be sought from CSC, the Police or the NSPCC.

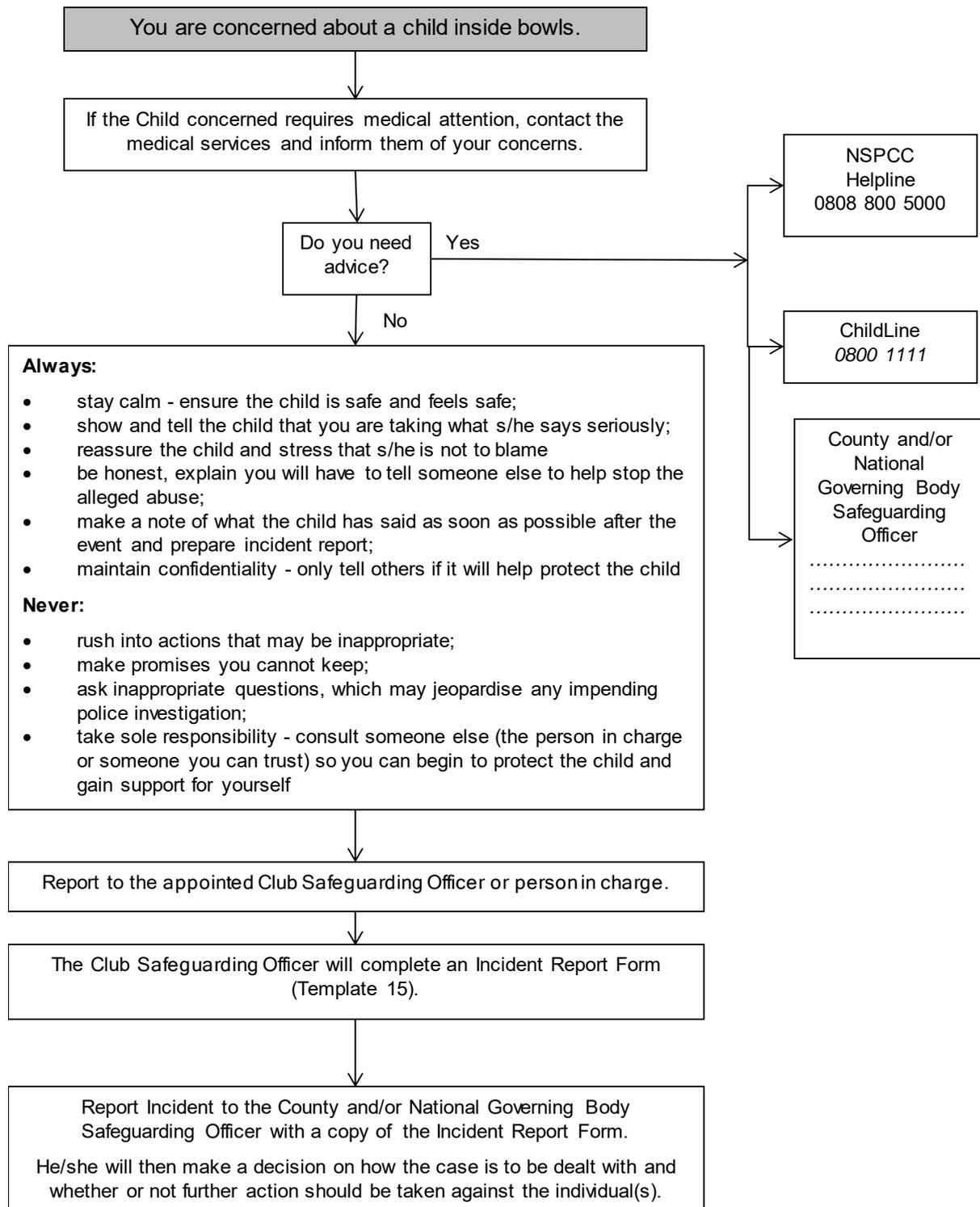
All concerns or allegations must be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

Until the allegations are substantiated only those directly involved in investigating the case should be informed.

If the allegation is found to be unfounded, confidentiality must be maintained.

In line with all data protection procedures, all confidential records kept by the NGB must be kept securely in a locked cabinet or a computer with password access, stored for a minimum period of 7 years, with limited access to authorised people only.

FLOWCHART (Within Bowls).



Reporting and Managing concerns outside of Bowls

There may be occasions when a concern is raised regarding poor practice or alleged abuse outside of bowls.

The process would be as follows:

- If there are immediate concerns, refer to statutory authorities and inform the Club Safeguarding Officer or County Safeguarding Officer or National Governing Body Safeguarding Officer (as appropriate).
- The Club's Safeguarding Officer should be informed.
- The Club Safeguarding Officer would report the concern to the County Safeguarding Officer or NGB Safeguarding Officer (as appropriate)
- The County Safeguarding Officer or NGB Safeguarding Officer (as appropriate) would report to the statutory authorities – CSC/ police if appropriate.
- The County Safeguarding Officer or NGB Safeguarding Officer (as appropriate) would advise on further action required at club level including support for the child and person making the referral.

Working in a school:

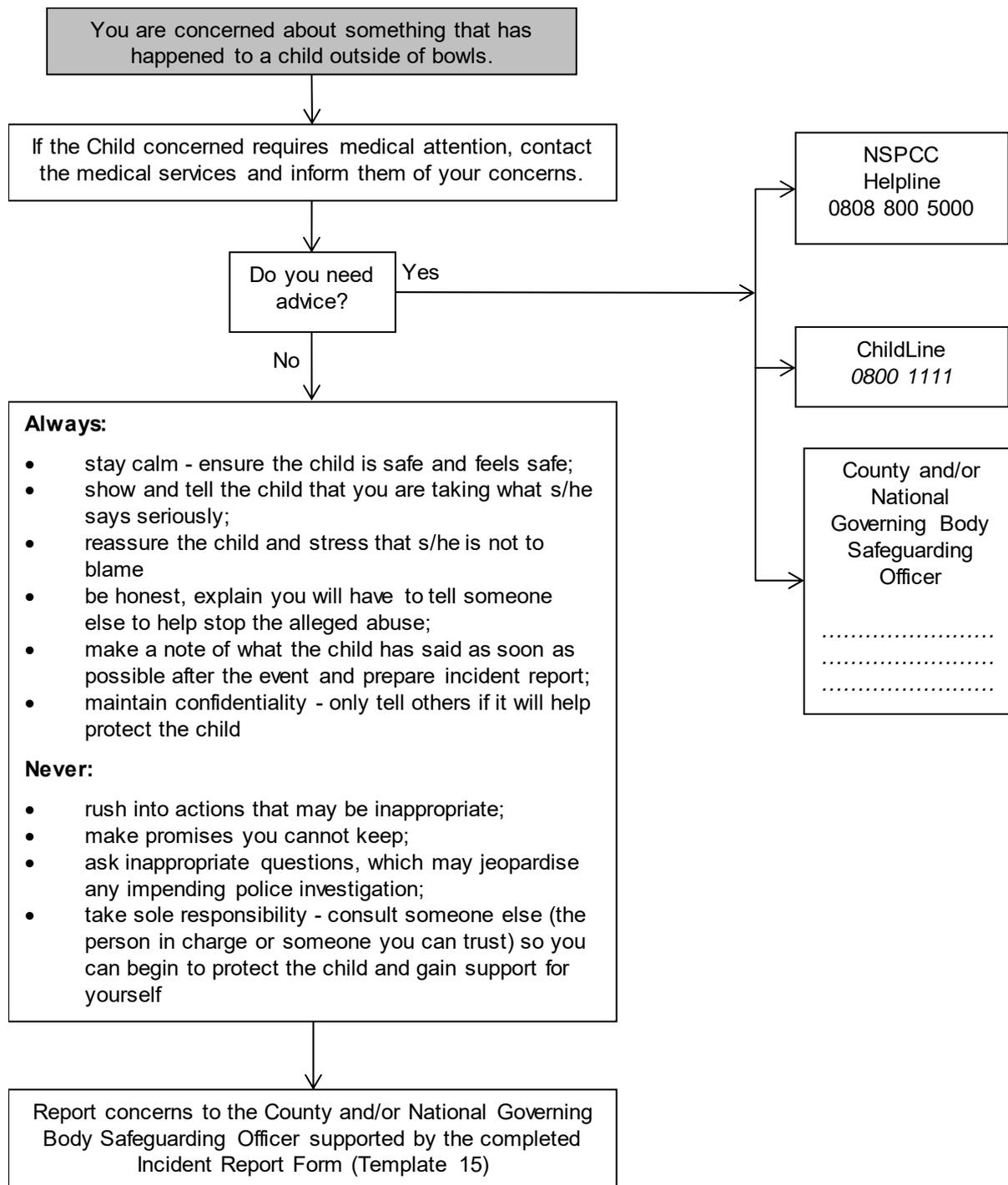
- Inform the designated teacher who will follow the school's child protection procedures and contact the statutory services – CSC/police as appropriate.
- Inform the NGB Safeguarding Officer for consideration of the implications within bowls.

Working on a local authority programme:

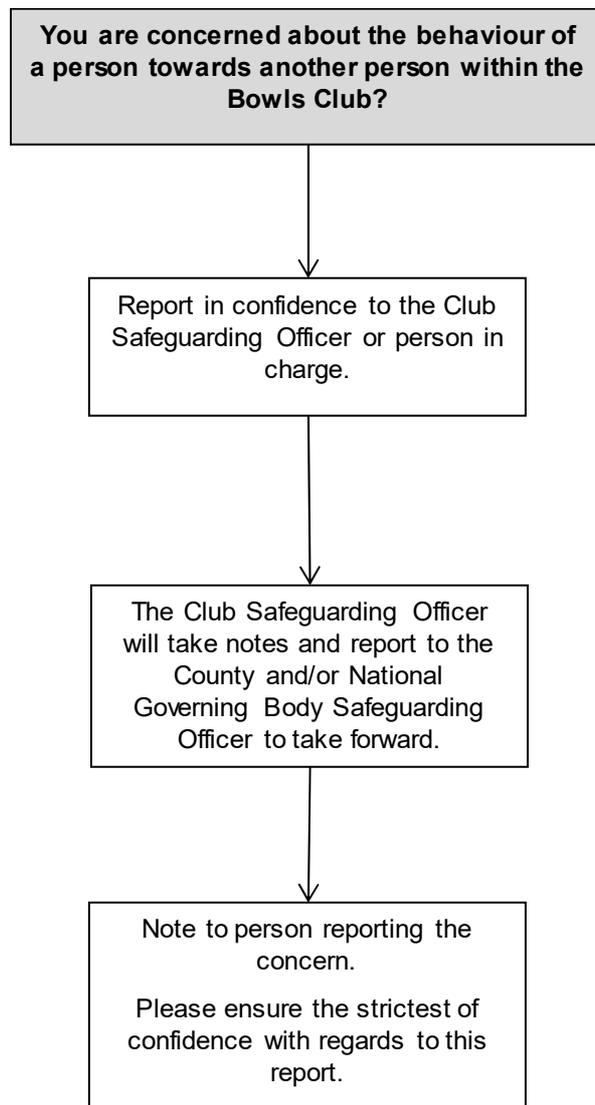
- Inform the Sports Development Officer or nominated person who will follow the local authority child protection procedures.
- www.local.gov.uk/our-support/guidance-and-resources/communications-support/digital-councils/social-media/go-further/a-z-councils-online
- Inform the NGB Safeguarding Officer for consideration of the implications within bowls.

FLOWCHART (outside Bowls)

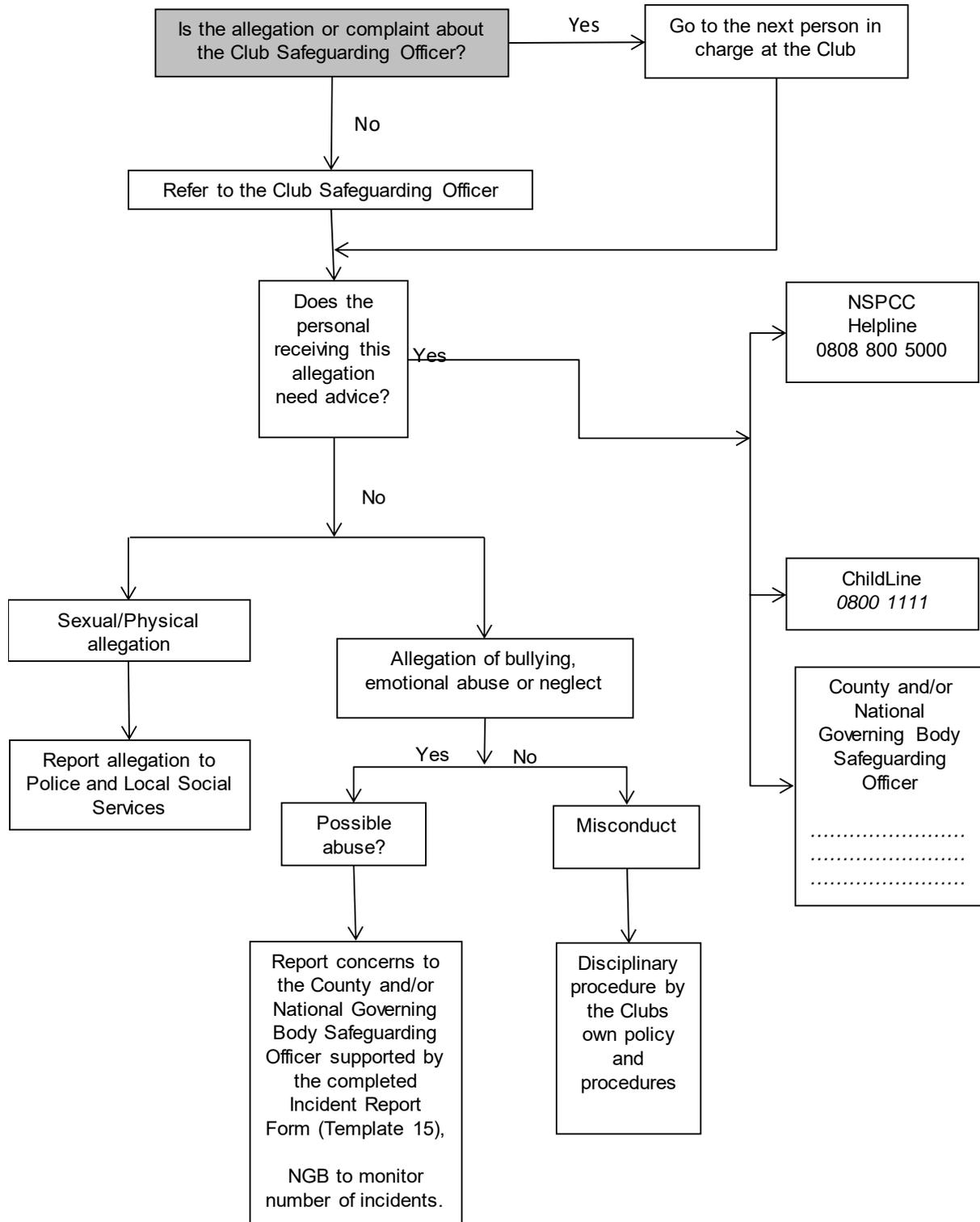
What to do if you are worried that a child is being abused outside the bowls environment (the concern is identified through the child's involvement in bowls).



FLOWCHART – A Parent/Carer’s concerns regarding a Child

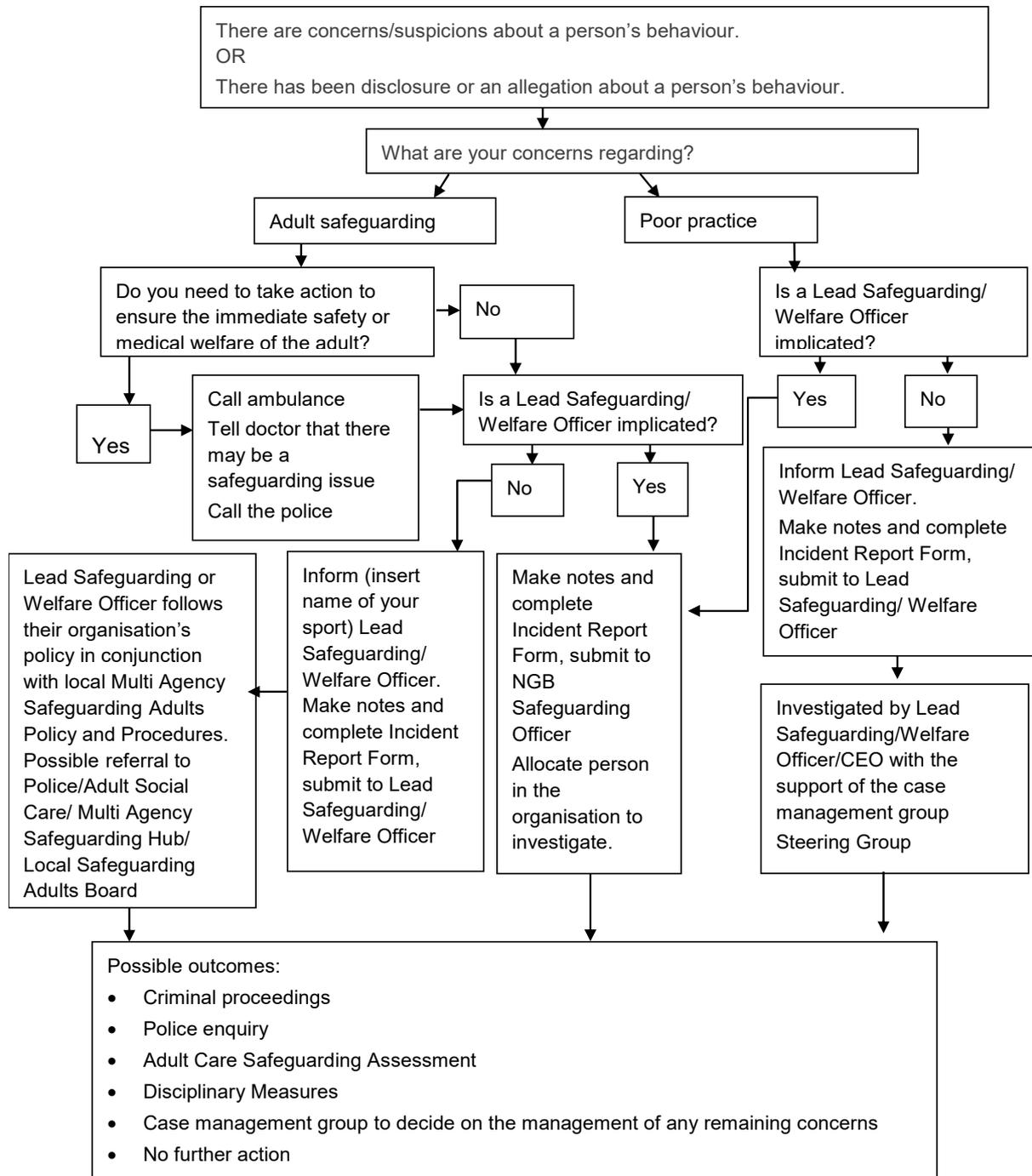


Flowchart dealing with the behaviour of a Club member



Safeguarding Adults Flowchart

Dealing with Concerns, Suspicions or Disclosure



Remember to involve the adult at risk throughout the process wherever possible and gain consent for any referrals to social care if the person has capacity

Allegations of Previous Abuse

An adult who was abused as a child by a person who is still working with children, may make allegations of abuse, sometime after the incident. Where such an allegation is made, you should follow the same procedures.

This is because other children either within the sport or outside it may be at risk from this person.

It is important to remember that anyone who has had a previous criminal conviction for offences related to abuse is legally prohibited from working with children.

Codes of Conduct

Safeguarding Bowls have developed codes of conduct that it is recommended that all participants within bowls sign up to. These are available in the “Guidelines” document.

The Child Protection in Sport Unit developed specific guidance around physical contact and young people in sport. These are available on the CPSU website – www.thecpsu.org.uk and outline a number of principles that should be followed when the activity involves physical contact.

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

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

The person should seek to explain to the child the nature and reason for the physical contact reinforcing the teaching or coaching skill. Unless the situation is an emergency, the person should ask the child for permission.

Any form of physical punishment of children is unlawful, as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour unless it is by way of restraint. It is particularly important that persons understand this, both to protect the child, their own position as well as the overall reputation of the sport.

There may be occasions where a distressed child needs comfort and reassurance, which may include physical comforting, such as a caring parent would give. Physical contact may also be required to prevent an accident or injury and this would be wholly appropriate. A child or coach may also want to mark a success or achievement with a hug or other gesture. A person should use their discretion in such cases to ensure that what is (and what is seen by others present) normal and natural does not become unnecessary and unjustified contact, particularly with the same child over a period of time.

Whistle-Blowing

The NGB's are committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for young people (U18) and adults at risk to participate in bowls and recognise their responsibility to promote a safe environment for any concerns to be reported without fear of reprisal.

Whistle-Blowing is an early warning system. It is about revealing and raising concerns over misconduct or malpractice within an organisation or within an independent structure associated with it.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 protects those who raise legitimate concerns about specified matters. It makes provision about the kinds of disclosure that may be protected and the circumstances in which disclosures are protected. This policy is therefore intended to comply with the Act by encouraging everyone in bowls to make disclosures about fraud, misconduct or wrongdoing in the sport of bowls and anyone within it, without fear of reprisal, so that problems can be identified, dealt with and resolved quickly.

See Guideline 3 Whistle-Blowing Policy.

Disciplinary Procedures

Each Club/County Association is encouraged to follow their own relevant disciplinary procedures.

Investigating Complaints

Where there is a complaint of abuse, there may be three types of investigation, each of which may have some level of NGB involvement:

- Disciplinary or misconduct – the NGB will be involved, informed by statutory services where applicable.
- Criminal – the Police are involved.
- Child protection – CSC are involved (possibly involving the Police).

If after consideration and investigation by the CSC or the Police, the incident is deemed to be poor practice, bullying or harassment, the Bowls Club, County or National Governing Body are empowered to deal with this as misconduct, and each organisation is recommended to adopt and apply the NGB Disciplinary Policy and Procedures.

Records and Information

Information passed to the CSC or the Police must be as helpful as possible - hence the necessity for making a detailed record at the time of the disclosure or concern will help you to ensure that all relevant details can be reported.

Reporting the matter to the Police or CSC should not be delayed by attempts to obtain more information.

- Wherever possible, referrals telephoned to CSC must be confirmed in writing within 24 hours.
- A record must also be made of the name and designation of the CSC officer or Police Officer to whom the concerns were passed, together with the time and date of the call, in case any follow-up is needed. Use the template form provided in Template 17.
- A copy of this information should be sent to the NGB Safeguarding Officer.

If advice is required on any aspect of the contents of these Guidelines, your NGB Safeguarding Officer should be available for advice, and useful contact details are as follows.

Additional Information

- NPSCC 24 hour freephone helpline 0808 800 5000; Website www.nspcc.org.uk
- Child Protection in Sport Unit – advice around safeguarding developments, www.thecpsu.org.uk; cpsu@nspcc.org.uk; 0116 234 7278

You can access any of the information through your NGB website

BCGBA – www.bcgba.org.uk

BE – www.bowlsengland.com

Bowls Development Alliance – www.playbowls.org

EBF – www.edbowls.co.uk

EIBA – www.eiba.co.uk

ESMBA – www.esmba.co.uk

Safeguarding Bowls – www.safeguardingbowls.org

Rules for information sharing

Remember that the Data Protection Act 2018 is not a barrier to sharing information but provides a framework to ensure that personal information about living persons is shared appropriately.

Be open and honest with the person (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.

Seek advice if you are in any doubt, without disclosing the identity of the person where possible.

Share with consent where appropriate and, where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. You may still share information without consent if, in your judgement, that lack of consent can be overridden in the public interest. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case.

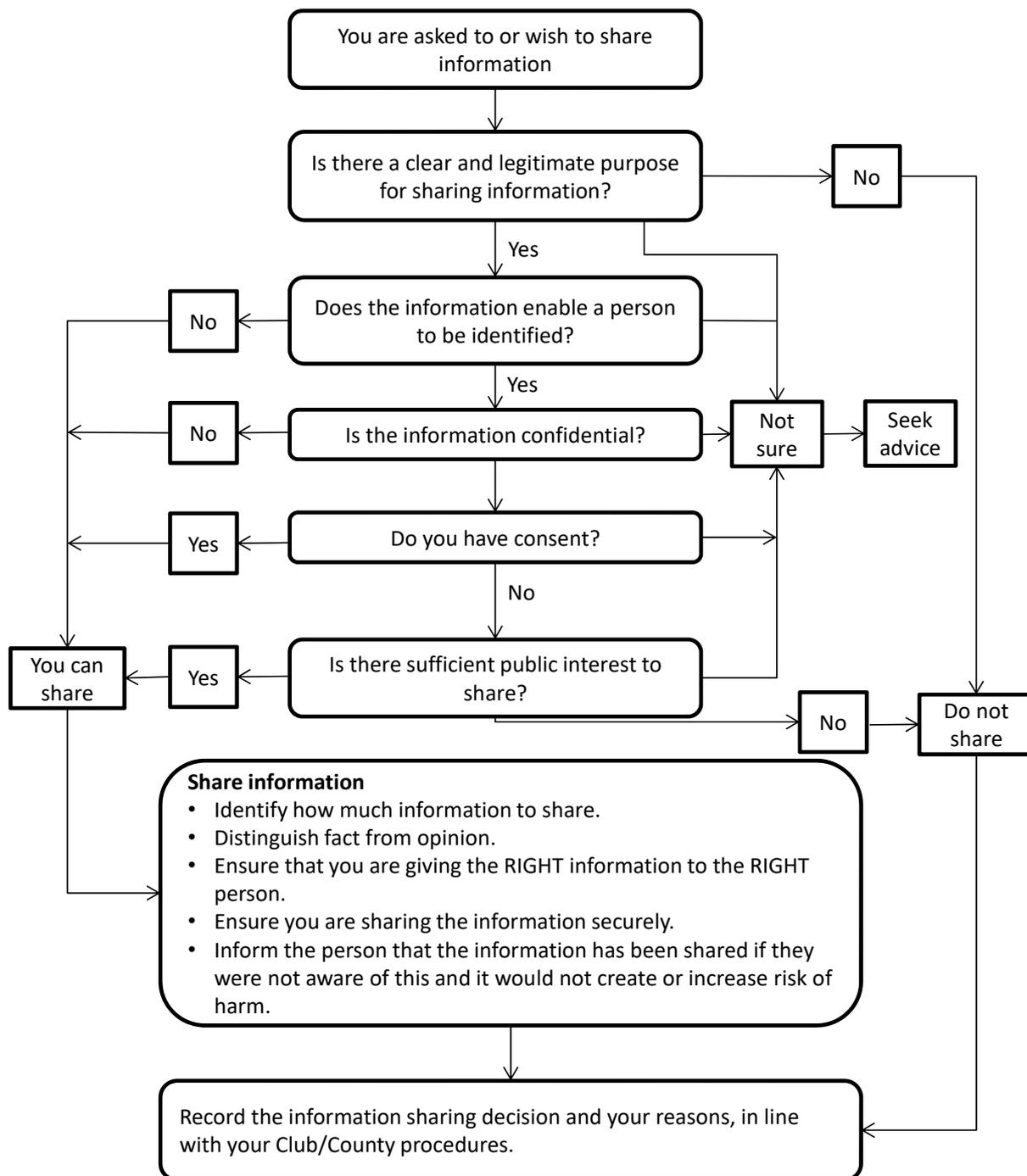
Consider safety and well-being: Base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the person and others who may be affected by their actions.

Necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure: Ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those people who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely.

Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

For more information or to discuss specific queries about information sharing, contact your NGB Safeguarding Officer.

Flowchart of key questions for information sharing



If there are concerns that a child or adult may be at risk of significant harm, then follow the relevant procedures without delay.