



Safeguarding Policy (Children and Young People)

Date Approved by BEF Board: 20 February 2023

To be reviewed : December 2023

This policy should be reviewed annually or when required due to a change within the BEF or in conjunction with relevant legislation. This policy applies to everyone within the BEF and its Member Bodies and should be read in conjunction with all other relevant Safeguarding documents including the Safeguarding Policy for Adults at Risk.



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1. Policy Statement

The British Equestrian (the “BEF” or “Federation”) places the highest priority on the safety and enjoyment of children and young people participating in equestrian sport and is committed to promoting the highest possible standard of care across the whole Federation. It therefore aims to ensure that all children and young people, regardless of age, ability or disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, socio-economic background have a positive and enjoyable experience of our sport in a safe and child centred environment.

To meet its objective the BEF commits to:

- Ensuring children and young people are protected from harm, abuse and degrading treatment whilst participating in equestrian sports and associated activities;
- Helping everyone to adopt best practice to safeguard children and young people from abuse;
- Taking all steps to ensure that the protection of children and young people is the primary consideration and may override the rights and needs of those adults working with them;
- Developing a Federation wide culture of listening to children and taking account of their rights, wishes and feelings;
- Ensuring all allegations, suspicions of harm and concerns will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly, fairly and appropriately; and
- Working in partnership to promote the welfare, health and development of children and young people.

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018 - updated 1 July 2022) document published by the Department of Education states that:

- *A child centred approach is fundamental to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child. A child centred approach means keeping the child in focus when making decisions about their lives and working in partnership with them and their families.*
- *Everyone who works with children has a responsibility for keeping them safe. No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child’s needs and circumstances and, if children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action and;*
- *In order that organisations, agencies and practitioners collaborate effectively, it is vital that everyone working with children and families, including those who work with parents/carers, understands the role they should play and the role of other practitioners.*

The BEF’s Safeguarding Policy aims to help all those involved in our sport understand what they need to do, and what they can expect of one another, to safeguard children. It focuses on core legal



requirements and makes clear what individuals and organisations should do to keep children and young people safe.

The Board of Directors of the BEF endorses and is responsible for ensuring that this Safeguarding Policy is implemented and will deal with any actual or potential breaches. The BEF Chief Executive has the overall responsibility for the implementation of the Policy, supported by the BEF Safeguarding team and BEF Member Bodies. However, to achieve its overall aims, every member of the organisation, and its key partners and stakeholders, must be aware of the policy and ensure its widespread implementation.

This policy and all associated safeguarding policies and procedures apply to all volunteers, employees, athletes, spectators and anyone else involved with the Federation, irrespective of whether they are members of the Federation or one of its Member organisations.

All those involved in equestrian sport have a duty of care to safeguard the welfare of children and young people. This Policy and the procedures set out in it will be widely promoted and are mandatory for everyone involved in the BEF or its Member Bodies. Failure to comply with this Policy will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.

2. Introduction

The BEF places the highest priority on safety and enjoyment and recognises that it has a duty of care towards children and young people within the horse industry. Any organisation, establishment or individual providing riding or horse management opportunities must do so with the highest possible standard of care.

To ensure this, BEF and its Member Bodies are committed to devising and implementing policies and procedures to ensure that all those involved, accept their responsibilities to safeguard children from harm and abuse.

The BEF fully accepts its legal and moral obligation to children and young people and its duty of care to protect children and young people and to safeguard their welfare. As part of our safeguarding policy the BEF will:

- Promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and young people
- Ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and is provided with appropriate learning opportunities to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and young people
- Ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents/concerns of abuse and support provided to the individual/s who raise or disclose the concern
- Ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored
- Prevent the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals
- Ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation.



The BEF acknowledges that some children and young people, including disabled children and young people or those from ethnic minority communities, can be particularly vulnerable to abuse and we accept the responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare.

3. Definitions Used in this Policy

A child is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. We therefore use the term “Children” in this policy to include ‘children and young people not yet 18’ throughout.

The terms “safeguarding” and “child protection” are often used in conjunction. We use the term “Safeguarding” in this policy to include child protection, based on the following definitions.

Working Together to Safeguard Children defines Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as:

- *protecting children from maltreatment*
- *preventing impairment of children’s health or development*
- *ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care*
- *taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes*

The NSPCC defines Safeguarding and Child Protection as the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

“Child protection is part of the safeguarding process. It focuses on protecting individual children identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. This includes child protection procedures which detail how to respond to concerns about a child” (NSPCC, 2018).

4. Statutory Framework

In order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, the BEF and Member Bodies will act in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

England & Wales

- Children Acts 1989 & 2004
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) 1989
- The European Convention on Human Rights 1950
- Police Act 1997
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, 2018)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006



- Sexual Offences (Amendments) Act 2003
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Care Act 2014 - implemented March 2015
- Information Sharing Advice - HM Government 2018
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused. - March 2015
- Procedures set out by the local Safeguarding Children Boards
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022

Scotland

- Children (Scotland) Act 1995
- Protection from Abuse (Scotland) Act 2001
- Protection of Children and Prevention of Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2005
- Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007
- Children and Young People (Scotland) 2014
- National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (Scottish Government, 2021)

Northern Ireland

- The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995
- Safeguarding Board Act (Northern Ireland) 2001
- Article 17 and 18 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 2003
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007
- Criminal Law Act (Northern Ireland) 1967
- Safeguarding and child protection in schools – a guide for schools (Department of Education, 2020)
- How to identify and manage harmful sexual behaviour displayed by children and young people (Department of Education (DE), 2022)

5. Roles of the BEF and Member Bodies

The BEF and its Member Bodies have formally adopted this policy and all associated policies, procedures and guidance. In addition, in order to ensure that everyone understands their responsibilities for safeguarding children and young people, the Federation has developed a Memorandum of Understanding that clearly sets out the responsibilities of the BEF and that of the Member Bodies.

In pursuit of this, the BEF working in partnership with its Member Bodies is committed to ensuring that:

- The welfare of all children and young people is paramount, and children and young people have the right to protection from abuse.
- It takes all reasonable, practical steps to protect children and young people from harm, discrimination and degrading treatment and to respect their rights, wishes and feelings.

- All concerns and allegations of poor practice or abuse are taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- High standards of behaviour and practice are maintained through compliance with BEF and Member Body codes of conduct produced for all those involved in our sport.
- Everyone knows and accepts their responsibilities and works together: riders, parents/carers or relevant family members, coaches, proprietors, volunteers, and professional staff.

The role of the BEF is to:

- Provide a strategic overview and guidance on safeguarding children and young people and promote their welfare.
- Provide guidance on best practice in recruitment, training and supervision of staff, members and volunteers, parents and carers.
- Provide access to approved safeguarding education and training to staff at BEF and for Member Body Lead Safeguarding Officers.
- Respond to and support Member Bodies with the management of allegations, concerns and complaints relating to children and young people, initiating Case Management systems and processes as necessary, liaising with the Case Management Group as requested by Member Bodies.
- Coordinate and update a central database (MyConcern) for all concerns/incidents shared by Member Bodies.
- Give guidance on the implementation and management of appropriate disciplinary and appeals procedures in relation to children and young people, including monitoring the outcomes of any such events as requested by Member Bodies.
- Coordinate the Safeguarding Advisory Team (SAT) and the Case Management Group (CMG).
- Ensure that all incidents are correctly reported and referred out in accordance with the BEF guidelines.
- Ensure that BEF procedures for recruitment of staff and volunteers, within the BEF, are followed and all appropriate existing staff or volunteers have up to date criminal record checks if appropriate.
- Review and monitor the implementation of the policy and procedures on an annual basis.
- Ensure that all data collected by the BEF is kept securely in accordance with data protection legislation.

In order to support Member Bodies with safeguarding and child protection matters, the BEF coordinates a national development group, the **Safeguarding Action Team (SAT)**, which provides a forum, through full member body representation, to develop and share best practice for the purpose and benefit of safeguarding the equestrian industry.

The BEF also facilitates the Federation wide **Case Management Group (CMG)** whose role is to:

- Provide support, advice and consultation;
- Provide Case Management Support;
- Give guidance on best practice



The BEF Safeguarding Officer

As part of its commitment to safeguarding, the BEF employs a Safeguarding Officer who leads on policy, procedures and provides support and guidance for the Member Bodies within the Federation.

The specific role of the BEF Safeguarding Officer is to:

- Lead and coordinate safeguarding across the Federation
- Manage and coordinate all safeguarding concerns
- Develop and maintain Federation wide safeguarding policies and procedures
- Coordinate with Member Bodies and outside agencies where necessary
- Monitor and feed back to the Board.

Safeguarding Officer Contact details:

Telephone Numbers: 02475 313437 or 07535 776192

Email: safeguarding@bef.co.uk

The BEF Board has also appointed a Board Safeguarding Champion to:

- provide leadership at Board level to promote safeguarding best practice in equestrianism across the Federation and to champion the BEF's role as the central hub for safeguarding knowledge and in providing leadership in case management.
- To ensure that safeguarding standards are maintained by the BEF and that safeguarding is embedded within the work, discussions and decisions of the Board
- To work in conjunction with the Board Welfare and Safety Champion in relation to welfare and safety issues that cross over into the protection and safeguarding of children, young adults and adults at risk.

As part of this role, the BEF Board will ensure that safeguarding is discussed at every Board and Council meeting.

The role of each Member Body is:

- To ensure representation on the SAT.
- To ensure that the clubs, centres, and schools within their Member Body are aware of BEF and Member Body policies, procedures and guidelines and adopt them as appropriate.
- Play a lead role in developing and establishing the organisation's approach to safeguarding children and young people.
- To implement and manage appropriate disciplinary and appeals procedures in relation to children and young people ensuring that the BEF is informed.

- To respond to and manage any allegations or complaints made from within the Member Body.
- Operationally, to deal with the complaint/allegation to conclusion in line with the agreed protocols.
- To ensure that all relevant safeguarding concerns and incidents that occur are reported on MyConcern.
- To ensure there is clear communication within each Member Body with regard to children and young people
- To ensure that all policies and procedures are made accessible to parents/carers.
- To ensure the effective protection and safeguarding of children and young people by encouraging and supporting each club, riding school, event or competition organiser to appoint a Safeguarding Officer.
- To encourage and support each club, riding school, event or competition organiser to adopt and promote BEF and Member Body policies and procedures.
- To provide and promote education and training in safeguarding, in partnership with the BEF, to support staff, members and volunteers.
- To manage and monitor the implementation of the policy and procedures and feed back to the BEF on an annual basis.
- To ensure that Member Body procedures for recruitment of staff and volunteers are followed and all appropriate existing staff or volunteers have up to date disclosure checks in line with procedures.
- To ensure that codes of conduct are in place for club/centre staff, volunteers, coaches, young people and parents.
- Ensure safeguarding standards are met and maintained.
- To ensure confidentiality is maintained and information is only shared on a “need to know” basis.

The role of each organisation’s Safeguarding Officer is:

- To adopt and promote the BEF and Member Body policies and procedures.
- To promote education and training to support staff, members and volunteers.
- To manage and monitor the implementation of the policy and procedures.
- To be the first point of contact for staff and volunteers, young people and parents for any issue concerning children and young people welfare, poor practice or potential/alleged abuse.
- To record and report monitoring information as required.
- To respond to any allegations or complaints by reporting to the Member Body’s Lead Safeguarding Officer.
- To maintain local contact details for Children’s Social Services, the Police and Member Body Lead Safeguarding Officer.
- To ensure confidentiality is maintained and information is only shared on a “need to know” basis.
- To respond to any allegations or complaints made from within the Member Body. Operationally, to deal with the complaint/allegation to conclusion in line with agreed protocols.

6. Child Abuse

The NSPCC states that child abuse happens when a person – adult or child – harms a child. It can be physical, sexual or emotional, but can also involve a lack of love, care and attention (NSPCC, 2017).

There are four main categories of child abuse:

Physical abuse - happens when a child is deliberately hurt, causing injuries such as cuts, bruises, burns and broken bones. It can involve hitting, kicking, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or suffocating.

Neglect - is persistently failing to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs usually resulting in serious damage to their health and development.

Sexual abuse - is forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. It doesn't necessarily involve violence and the child may not be aware that what is happening is abuse. Child sexual abuse can involve contact abuse and/or non-contact abuse. Contact abuse happens when the abuser makes physical contact with the child.

Emotional Abuse - is persistent and, over time, it severely damages a child's emotional health and development and can take the form of constantly putting a child down, shouting at a child and calling them names and persistently ignoring a child. Examples of emotional abuse in sport include subjecting children to constant criticism, name calling, and sarcasm or bullying. It could also include their regular exclusion from an activity, such as unjustified non-selection for a team or more subtle actions such as staring at or ignoring a child. Putting children under consistent pressure to perform to unrealistically high standards is also a form of emotional abuse.

For more information on the categories of child abuse, see Appendix 1.

7. Good and Poor practice

The BEF is committed to ensuring that all those involved in equestrian sport are safe from harm and abuse and therefore it is important for those all those working or volunteering in our sport to adopt the following guidelines of good practice:

- Always work in an open environment, ensuring that, where possible, interactions take place in view of others and with consent of those involved.
- Treat all children and young people fairly and with dignity and respect irrelevant of gender, ability, race, ethnicity or sex.

- Ensure that the child's or young person's welfare is always of paramount concern and should always be considered above winning and competition.
- Recognise the needs of each individual child or young person to avoid excessive training or undue pressure.
- Encourage children and young people to take responsibility for their own sporting development and support them with any decision they make.
- Build and maintain friendly, balanced and appropriate relationships with children and young people; including parents/carers where possible
- Always challenge poor behaviour, bullying, harassment, foul or inappropriate language or any other behaviour that could upset individuals.

Poor Practice

The following are examples of poor practice and should be avoided:

- Engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games or behaviour
- Showing any form of favouritism
- Shouting, making negative comments or any other form of bullying towards athletes
- Using harassing, discriminatory or provocative language
- Engaging in inappropriate relationships with athletes under 18 years of age
- Spending unnecessary time alone with an athlete in a 1:1 situation
- Transporting athletes to events or training
- Having unnecessary physical contact with athletes
- Failing to adhere to organisational policies and procedures.

This list is not exhaustive and there are many other examples of poor practice.

8. Children with additional vulnerabilities

Deaf and Disabled children may be more vulnerable and at greater risk of all forms of abuse. The presence of multiple disabilities increases the risk of both abuse and neglect. Some of the common factors that can lead to increased vulnerability include:

- **Communication Barriers** – children with speech and communication needs may face additional barriers when attempting to share their concerns. Adults may lack the knowledge and understanding to communicate with children and quite often the parent or carer may be the sole source of communication between the organisation and the child.
- **Increased isolation** – deaf and disabled children may have less contact with other people outside of their family meaning that they may have fewer people to provide support. Deaf and disabled children may also have limited access to support systems which can make it difficult for parents/carers and their children.
- **Dependency** – children with disabilities may rely on parents/carers and it can be difficult to disclose abuse if their abuser is someone close to them.



- **Misunderstanding the signs of abuse** – signs and indicators of abuse can be misinterpreted by others due to the nature of a child’s disability.
- **Lack of education** – deaf and disabled children are not always able to successfully access education around keeping safe; this may result in those children not understanding or being aware of abusive situations.

Children with disabilities have the same rights to protection as any other child and it is important for all those working in the equestrian industry to ensure that they are aware of the individual needs and additional vulnerabilities of the children they work with.

Many children and young people who come from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities experience racism, bias, stereotyping or cultural misunderstanding as they grow up. It might happen at an individual, institutional, or societal level and might be displayed consciously or unconsciously.

Research indicates that children from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups are less likely to come to the attention of authorities, face additional barriers to accessing statutory services and receive a poorer quality of support. ([Children’s Commissioner, 2015](#)). In addition, children from certain communities are perceived as being more adult like (known as adultification). They are seen through a lens of deviancy and not necessarily acknowledged as deserving victims, and their innocence and vulnerability is erased over time.

We recognise that we may encounter ‘unconscious bias’, which refers to a bias that we are unaware of, and which happens outside of our control. It is a bias that happens automatically and is triggered by our brain making quick judgments and assessments of people and situations, influenced by our background, cultural environment and personal experiences. (Equality Challenge Unit: Unconscious bias and Higher Education, 2013). We should ensure that conscious efforts are made and actions taken to provide an equitable safeguarding response for all people on an individual and systemic level.

To make sure children from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities get the help and support they need, the adults working or volunteering with them and their families need to:

- understand the challenges they face
- build trusting relationships
- take appropriate action to help keep children safe
- use a strength-based approach to empower parents and carers from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities to take steps to keep their children safe.

9. Position of Trust and Abuse of trust in the Equestrian Industry

Position of Trust

Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 an adult is in a position of trust over a child if they regularly teach, train, supervise or have sole charge of the child in certain settings (e.g. hospitals, residential care, schools) or when in certain roles (e.g. teacher, care worker). This rule has been extended via the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 to apply to those who train, supervise or instruct young people in the fields of sport and religion.

Abuse of Trust

Sexual activity between an adult in a position of trust and a child is deemed to be an abuse of trust and is unlawful, even if the child is over the age of consent (i.e. the child is 16). Sports coaches are now recognised in law as being in “positions of trust” and so banned from engaging in sexual activity with under 18s in their care. Coaches and other officials should ensure they maintain healthy, positive and professional relationships with all participants.

10. Duty of Care

All sport organisations need to take all reasonable measures to ensure the safety and welfare of all children and young people involved in the sport. Duty of Care is considered in two ways:

The Legal Duty of Care

This refers to Health and Safety procedures where clear guidance and procedures are in place to ensure that steps are taken to minimise any dangers or hazards.

The Moral Duty of Care

This can more correctly be described as the sporting organisation’s responsibility for the safety and welfare of all children and young people involved.

11. Dealing with a Disclosure

All those involved in equestrian sport must recognise their own responsibility to safeguard children and young people and the importance of taking action where a concern about a child or young person has been raised.

It is not the responsibility of anyone working with the BEF or Member Bodies to make a judgement on whether or not child abuse has taken place; however, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns that are raised.

Those working in the equine industry may find themselves in a position where a child makes a disclosure of harm or abuse and if this happens it is important that the appropriate action is taken. All Member Bodies and those involved with them are expected to adhere to the following procedures if a child discloses that they have been abused in some way

Dealing with a disclosure

- When information about possible abuse comes to light, find time and a suitable place to listen to the child.
- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock, disbelief or attempting to lead the child.
- Do not make false promises and do not promise confidentiality. If the child asks that information is kept secret, it is important that you tell the child in a manner appropriate to the child's age that you cannot promise complete confidentiality—instead you must explain that you may need to pass information on to other professionals to help keep the child, or other children, safe.
- Allow the child to talk freely. Do not cross examine, interview, probe or ask to see any injury that is not visible. Listen, only asking non-leading questions when necessary to clarify.
- Do not criticise the alleged perpetrator.
- Reassure the child that what has happened is not his/her fault.
- Stress that it was the right thing to tell someone.
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told.
- Find out just enough to be sure of the need to refer, and keep any questions open (e.g. requiring information) rather than closed (e.g. only requiring a yes or no answer).
- Make records that are factual, accurate and relevant and avoid subjective judgements. It is not your responsibility to 'check out' what any child tells you nor should any abuser be questioned.
- Print, sign and date the record of disclosure and include your designation.

It is important that each Member Bodies reporting procedures are followed when reporting safeguarding concerns.

When recording a disclosure, it is important that the information is clear, concise and a true representation of the concerns. In some incidents, it may be necessary to share information with Children's Social Care or the police, hence the necessity for making detailed records at the time of the disclosure. Information should be factual and should include the following:

- The facts about the allegation or observation.
- A description of any visible injuries or signs.
- The child's account, if this has been disclosed, of what has happened and how any injuries occurred.
- Any witnesses to the incident(s).
- Any times, dates or other relevant information
- A clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.



- A record of any non-verbal behaviours
- Action taken as a result of the concern
- The name, address and date of birth of those involved.

Please note: Where possible you should include the relevant dates, times, situation, people present and factual information, including the dates, times and designation of the report writer. The record must then be signed with the name and designation clearly printed beneath.

12. Safer Recruitment

Anyone undertaking a role that involves contact with or responsibility for children (or other vulnerable groups) on behalf of a MB should be taken through a Safer Recruitment process. It is essential that there are effective recruitment and selection procedures for both paid staff and volunteers.

Safer Recruitment checklist

Best practice for Safer Recruitment procedures include:

- Creating a clear job or role description (what tasks will be involved)
- Creating a person specification (what experience or attributes the successful candidate needs in order to carry out the role)
- Creating an advertisement for the post
- Using an application form to gather relevant information about each applicant
- Requiring specific written references
- Interviewing the applicant
- For eligible posts, undertaking a criminal records check:
 - Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) – England and Wales
 - Disclosure Scotland – Scotland
 - AccessNI – Northern Ireland
- Risk assessment of any concerning information
- Verifying qualifications and experience
- Recording recruitment decision
- Induction to the role (including safeguarding policies and procedures, safeguarding training, sign up to Code of Conduct)
- Probationary period

In some instances, you may feel that it is not practical to include all these steps in a recruitment process, but you are strongly recommended to incorporate as many elements as you can.

13. Guidance for sharing information

Guidance from the Government, [Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners](#), describes key principles for deciding what to share, the 'seven golden rules for information sharing':

1. **Remember that the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and human rights law are not barriers** to justified information sharing, but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.
2. **Be open and honest with the individual** (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.
3. **Seek advice from other practitioners** if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.
4. **Share with informed consent where appropriate** and, where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to having their information shared. You may still share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is lawful basis to do so, such as where safety may be at risk.
5. **Consider safety and well-being:** Base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.
6. **Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, 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 individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely.
7. **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.

The BEF and its Member Bodies will share information to achieve their objective of ensuring that children, young adults and adults at risk are effectively safeguarded across the Federation. The sharing of data will take place in accordance with Data Protection law and guidance and where it is necessary to do so in order to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children.

14. Informing parents/carers

Wherever possible, personnel concerned about the welfare of a child should work in partnership with parents/carers. Therefore, in most situations, it would be important to talk to parents/carers to help clarify any initial concerns (e.g. if a child's behaviour has changed, it is important to check whether there is a reasonable explanation such as family upset or bereavement).



However, there are circumstances in which a young person might be placed at even greater risk if concerns are shared (e.g. where a parent/carer may be responsible for the abuse or not able to respond to the situation appropriately). In these situations or where concerns still exist, any suspicion, allegation or incident of abuse must be reported to the designated Lead Safeguarding Officer and BEF Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible.

15. Safeguarding training

The BEF has developed a safeguarding training implementation plan which details what level of training is required for all those working in the organisation.

The BEF, along with other Member Bodies, have developed a face to face Safeguarding workshop and several online courses for all those involved in the equestrian industry. For more information visit the BEF website.

Appendix 1 - Types of Abuse

“Child abuse is any action by another person – adult or child – that causes significant harm to a child. It can be physical, sexual or emotional, but can just as often be about a lack of love, care and attention. We know that neglect, whatever form it takes, can be just as damaging to a child as physical abuse.

An abused child will often experience more than one type of abuse, as well as other difficulties in their lives. It often happens over a period of time, rather than being a one-off event. And it can increasingly happen online.” (NSPCC, online, 2016).

There are four main categories of abuse:

Physical Abuse: A form of abuse which 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.

Example of Physical Abuse in Sport

It is normal for children to have cuts and bruises on their bodies caused by accidents which happen whilst they are moving about and/or playing. These are marks that have an acceptable and reasonable explanation. Marks or injuries which do not have an acceptable explanation may indicate that a child has been abused.

Bodily Harm that may be caused by:

- Over training or dangerous training of athletes.
- Over playing an athlete.
- Failure to do a risk assessment of physical limits or pre-existing medical conditions.
- Administering, condoning or failure to intervene in drug use.

Other signs of physical abuse include multiple injuries (i.e. bruising, fractures) inflicted at different times. It is particularly concerning if parents/carers are unable to explain these injuries and it is not clear whether they took the child to receive medical treatment at the time of the injury.

Signs which **may** raise concerns about physical abuse include:

- Refusal to discuss injuries
- Aggression towards others
- Improbable excuse given to explain injuries
- Fear of parents being approached for an explanation
- Running away
- Untreated injuries
- Excessive physical punishment
- Unexplained injuries, particularly if recurrent
- Avoiding activities due to injuries or possibility of injuries being discovered

- Wearing long or extra clothing to hide injuries

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.

Example of Sexual Abuse in Sport

- Exposure to sexually explicit inappropriate language or jokes.
- Showing a child pornographic material or using a child to produce such material.
- Sexual intercourse and/or sexual activity with a child under 18.

Signs which **may** raise concerns about sexual abuse include:

- Lack of trust in adults or over familiarity with adults, fear of a particular adult
- Sleep disturbance (nightmares or bed-wetting)
- Girls taking over the mothering role
- Reluctance or refusal to participate in physical activity or to change clothes
- Drug, alcohol or solvent abuse
- Sexual promiscuity, over-sexualised behaviour, compulsive masturbation
- Unusual interest in the genitals of adults, children or animals
- Bruises, scratches, bite marks to the thighs or genital areas
- Discomfort/difficulty in walking or sitting
- Urinary tract problems, vaginal infection or genital damage
- Stained underwear, soiling or wetting
- Fear of bathrooms, showers, closed doors
- Having irrational fears
- Psychosomatic factors e.g. recurrent
- Social isolation – being withdrawn or introverted, poor peer relationship
- Running away from home
- School problems e.g. falling standards, truancy
- Low self-esteem
- Display of sexual knowledge beyond the child's age
- Eating disorders
- Anxiety, depression, self-harm/mutilations, suicide attempts
- Pregnancy
- Fear of medical examinations
- Genital odour, venereal/sexually transmitted disease
- Itchiness, soreness, discharge, unexplained bleeding from the rectum, vagina or penis
- Abnormal sexual drawings
- Developmental regression/acting younger than their age
- "Grooming" including over the internet
- Wearing extra clothing/clothing tied tight; reluctance to wear sports kit

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 a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued 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 a child’s developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), 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.

It is important to remember that some children are naturally open and affectionate whilst others are quieter and more self-contained. Children also develop at different rates from one another and some may be slightly more or less advanced than other children in their age group. Mood swings and challenging behaviour are also a normal part of growing up for teenagers and children going through puberty. Be alert to behaviours which appear to be out of character for the individual child.

Examples of Emotional Abuse in Sport

- Persistent failure to show any respect to a child e.g. continually ignoring a child.
- Constantly humiliating a child by telling them they are useless; subjecting children to constant criticism, name calling, and sarcasm or bullying
- Regular exclusion from an activity, such as unjustified non-selection for a team Continually being aggressive towards a child making them feel frightened.
- Acting in a way which is detrimental to the child’s self-esteem.
- Putting children under consistent pressure to perform to unrealistically high standards is also a form of emotional abuse

Signs which **may** raise concerns about emotional abuse include:

- Low self-esteem
- Running away
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Significant decline in concentration
- Indiscriminate friendliness and neediness
- Self-harm or mutilation

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. 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.

Example of Neglect in Sport

- Persistent failure to show any respect to a child e.g. continually ignoring a child.
- Constantly humiliating a child by telling them they are useless.
- Continually being aggressive towards a child making them feel frightened.
- Exposing a child to extreme weather conditions e.g. heat and cold.
- Failing to seek medical attention for injuries.
- Exposing a child to risk of injury through the use of unsafe equipment.
- Exposing a child to a hazardous environment without a proper risk assessment of the activity.
- Failing to provide adequate nutrition and water.

Signs which **may** raise concerns about neglect include:

- Constant hunger
- Constant tiredness
- Untreated medical problems
- poor peer relationships
- Poor personal hygiene and/or poor state of clothing
- Frequent lateness or unexplained non- attendance
- Low self-esteem
- Stealing

Please note that this is not an exhaustive list and the presence of one or more of the indicators is not proof that abuse is actually taking place. Any concerns that you have about children should be investigated appropriately.

Appendix 2 – Grooming Overview

Understanding the grooming or entrapment process

Most sport activities offer excellent opportunities for young people to train, try new things, make friends and improve their skills. They are often the places where appropriate trusting relationships are developed. Such relationships of trust should be used appropriately to advise young people and demonstrate the positive values of sport. However, sport activities can also provide opportunities for adults to target and groom a child or young person through their role as a volunteer or paid employee.

Grooming is defined by the Home Office as “Communication with a child where there is an intention to meet and commit a sex offence with that child”. More generally it can be seen as the process by which an individual manipulates all those around him/her, including, but not exclusively, the child, to provide opportunities to abuse that child and reduce the likelihood of being reported or discovered. The abuser will also attempt to manipulate the circumstances in which he/she is working to enhance the likelihood of working in an unobserved one to one situation with that person. Abusers come from all sections of society and are often perceived by others as respectable, reliable and trustworthy people. Research tells us that the vast majority of abusers are well known to the child and often hold a position of trust or authority. Recent research has found that sporting organisations are the third largest arena for incidents of sexual abuse.

The key factors which enable the coach/official to exploit a child are:

1. Sport opportunity

If the sport training facility provides situations or opportunities for the coach/authority figure that are not recognised as good practice (eg. allowing the coach/authority figure to develop an opportunity/excuse to meet the child outside the venue), this can contribute to the vulnerability or potential susceptibility of the child in that situation. He/she may feel unable to refuse the offer or be flattered by the invitation.

2. Coach/authority figure inclination

The coach/authority figure may have a desire or interest in developing a relationship beyond that of the appropriate coach/authority figure/child relationship and the good practice boundaries expected by the sport and family of that relationship.

3. Athlete vulnerability

The child by virtue of the relationship with their coach/authority figure is vulnerable. They may view any potential inappropriate coach/authority figure behaviour as acceptable in order to achieve or advance their goals within the sport. Conversely the child may be anxious that questioning or raising a concern about the coach/authority figure's behaviour may jeopardise their selection for their team or similar section.

Importance of challenging secrets

If abuse remains a secret, abusers will continue to abuse. If someone speaks about the abuse, this allows us to end the abuse, support the child and may open the door to treatment for the abuser.



The Child Protection in Sport Unit has provided a briefing; please see their website:

<https://the cpsu.org.uk/resource-library/best-practice/protecting-children-in-sport-from-grooming-and-sexual-abuse/>

Appendix 3 - Support for those involved.

Support for all involved

It is important to acknowledge that, in matters relating to any Child Protection incidents, it can be distressing for all involved. It is, therefore, important to be aware of sources of support and help that may be available in this situation.

The following organisations may be able to provide support:

Organisation	Contact Details
Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU)	Telephone Number: 0116 366 5590 Email: cpsu@nspcc.org.uk Website: www.thecpsu.org.uk
NSPCC Helpline	Telephone Number: 0808 800 5000 Email: help@nspcc.org.uk Website: www.nspcc.org.uk Online reporting: www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/report-abuse/report-abuse-online
ChildLine	Telephone Number: 0800 1111 Email: www.childline.org.uk/registration Website: www.childline.org.uk 1:2:1 chat: www.childline.org.uk/get-support/1-2-1-counsellor-chat
The Samaritans	Telephone Number: 116 123 Email: jo@samaritans.org Website: www.samaritans.org
Victim Support	Telephone Number: 0808 1689 111 Email: www.victimsupport.org.uk/help-and-support/get-help/supportline/email-supportline Website: www.victimsupport.org.uk Online support: www.victimsupport.org.uk/help-and-support/get-help/request-support
CEOP – Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre	Telephone Number: 0870 000 3344 Email: communication@nca.x.gsi.gov.uk Website: www.ceop.police.uk Online reporting: www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre
Self Help	Website: www.self-help.org.uk
Kidscape	Telephone Number: 020 7730 3300 Email: info@kidscape.org.uk Website: www.kidscape.org.uk
Family Lives	Telephone Number: 0808 800 2222 Website: www.familylives.org.uk