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**UNIVERSITY
OF SUSSEX**

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SUSSEXSPORT

**CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING POLICY
AND PROCEDURES**

CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING POLICY

CONTENTS

	Page
1.0 INTRODUCTION	3
2.0 POLICY STATEMENT	3
2.1 Policy Aims	4
2.2 Objectives	4
3.0 EMPLOYMENT ISSUES	
3.1 Recruitment	4
3.2 Induction and Training	5
3.3 Supervision	5
4.0 INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED TO EMPLOYEES	6
4.1 Recognition of Abuse	6
4.2 Main Forms of Abuse	7
4.3 Effects of Abuse	7
4.4 Bullying	8
5.0 GOOD PRACTICE	8
5.1 You should	8
5.2 You should never	9
6.0 WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE CONCERNS	10
6.1 What to do in responding to a child	10
6.2 Dealing with Allegations Against Staff/Volunteers	11
6.3 Confidentiality	12
6.4 Dealing with the Media	13
6.5 Off Duty Care Between Staff/Volunteers and Children	13
6.6 Guidelines on Photography and Use of Video	13
6.7 Use of Electronic Communication and Social media	14
6.8 Events and 3 rd Party hirers	15
6.9 Managing Challenging Behaviour	15
APPENDIX A : QUICK GUIDE 1	17
APPENDIX B : QUICK GUIDE 2	18
APPENDIX C : INCIDENT REPORT FORM	19
DECLARATION	21

CHILD PROTECTION & SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Children may be abused regardless of their age, racial origin, social class, gender, culture, religious belief, disability or sexual identity. Most abuse is committed by those who are known to the child and who are trusted by the child. This can be from within or outside the family including a sports situation.

As an organisation with responsibility for children, and that may work with vulnerable adults, we have both a moral and a legal obligation to ensure the highest possible standard of care for these individuals accessing our services.

Sussexsport and the University of Sussex is committed to providing safe, enjoyable activities and sporting opportunities for young people and vulnerable adults. To this end the following Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy Document has been compiled.

The purpose of the policy is to safeguard children and vulnerable adults placed in our care and to facilitate the best possible professional practice from Sussexsport and its staff.

A vulnerable adult can be defined as someone who may be for any reason unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

2.0 POLICY STATEMENT

Sussexsport is committed to ensuring that children and vulnerable adults are protected and kept safe from harm whilst they are engaged in any activity associated with them.

We will endeavour to achieve this by:

- Ensuring that our staff and volunteers are carefully selected, trained and supervised.
- Providing clear procedures for parents and children to voice their concerns or lodge complaints if they feel unsure or unhappy about any issue.
- That Sussexsport staff are aware of appropriate procedures to follow to ensure the safety of customers/users of our facilities.

2.1 Policy Aims

This Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy is provided as part of an induction package to all those employed by Sussexsport, whether paid or unpaid, who will have direct contact with children and vulnerable adults.

The aims are:

- To create a healthy and safe environment at all activities, sport programmes and sessions.
- To ensure children and vulnerable adults are listened to, and kept safe from harm.
- To support and encourage parents to voice their opinions regarding the welfare of their children.
- To ensure staff and volunteers who administer sessions are well informed, supported and enabled to provide the best possible practice.

2.2 Objectives

The objectives are:

- To raise the level of awareness of staff and volunteers about child abuse and its various forms.
- To raise the level of awareness of staff and volunteers about what children and vulnerable adults are entitled to be protected from.
- To ensure that all staff are able to recognise signs which could signify the abuse of a child.
- To promote the general welfare, health and full development of children and vulnerable adults during all sessions.
- To develop effective procedures in recording and responding to accidents and complaints and to alleged or suspected incidents of abuse.

3.0 Employment Issues

3.1 Recruitment and Selection of Staff/Volunteers

All applicants to provide recreational opportunities for children and/or vulnerable adults will complete a disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service to ensure that there are no irregularities in their background which may give cause for concern.

All new employees will be provided with the Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy as part of their induction.

Application forms are designed to ascertain as much information as possible, such as but not limited to:

- Past career, relevant interests, any gaps in employment and reasons for leaving, educational, National Governing Body and First aid qualifications.
- Consent for a Disclosure and Barring Service check.
- At least one reference is taken up, and where relevant followed up by letter or telephone. References taken up will allow senior Sussexsport staff to ascertain the person's suitability to work with children.
- It is made clear that all information remains confidential.
- Personal identification will be confirmed by reference to a passport, driving licence, birth or marriage certificate, National Insurance number and utility bill.
- That coaches hold adequate professional indemnity and/or personal liability insurance to cover their coaching role.

3.2 Induction and Training

The recruitment and selection process is followed up by relevant training.

- Staff are made aware that child abuse can and does occur and that it could be perpetrated by colleagues, who are Sussexsport members of staff.
- It is made clear that most abusers are not the monsters most people picture them to be, but ordinary men and women, more commonly men, and, at the extreme, clever, manipulative and powerful.
- Staff are made aware that children can find it very difficult to tell about abuse. They need to be listened to, taken seriously, and have their concerns acted upon.
- Staff are made aware of what they need to do in response to concerns reaching their eyes and ears.
- All staff who may be leading on working with children will be asked to attend the SportsCoachUk Good Practice and Child Protection Policy Workshop.

3.3 Supervision

In general, staff work most effectively where there is a line management structure that ensures they are supported, managed and developed. Sussexsport will ensure that line managers are sensitive to any concerns about abuse, act on them immediately, and offer support to those who report.

It is the responsibility of the line manager to monitor good practice, this can be done in a number of ways, for example:

- Observation of coaching practice
- Annual appraisals of instructors/coaches
- Provide feedback on performance against work programme
- Feedback from participants attending activities

4.0 Information to be provided to employees

4.1 RECOGNITION OF ABUSE

It is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place even for those experienced in working with child abuse. Sussexsport acknowledges its staff are not experts at such recognition. It is important therefore to recognise that **it is not their responsibility to decide whether or not abuse is taking place, but to report** where they have concerns or suspicions where an allegation has been made.

The concern that the child or vulnerable adult may have been abused could relate to something which has happened whilst the child is engaged in an activity run by Sussexsport, or it may be a disclosure made by the child to a staff member or volunteer or a concern about something the child or adult has experienced outside of the activity provided by Sussexsport. Either would require a proactive response.

There are many ways in which child abuse may manifest itself, for example:

- 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 behaviour over time e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper;
- inappropriate sexual awareness;
- engages in sexually explicit behaviour in games;
- is distrustful of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship will normally be expected;
- has difficulty in making friends;
- is prevented from socialising with other children;
- displays variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite;
- loses weight for no apparent reason;

- becomes increasingly dirty or unkempt.

This list is NOT exhaustive and the presence of one or more of the above is NOT proof that abuse is actually taking place.

4.2 Main Forms of Abuse

- **Physical Abuse**

Where adults physically hurt or injure children by hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning and biting or by giving children alcohol, inappropriate drugs or poison. **In the sporting situation physical abuse can occur when the type of training exceeds the capacity of the child's physical capability.**

- **Sexual Abuse**

This occurs when children are abused by adults who use children to meet their own sexual needs. This could include full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse, fondling and the showing of pornographic material. Physical contact with children could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. **The role of a coach in a sporting situation could provide the means of an abusive situation occurring.**

- **Emotional Abuse**

This may be caused by a persistent lack of love and affection, where a child may be constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted. It may also occur when there is constant overprotection (which prevents children from socialising), or there is neglect, physical or sexual abuse. Emotional abuse might occur if children are subjected to excessive criticism, inappropriate personal or sexual remarks, bullying, being exposed to undue or inappropriate pressure or exposed to danger.

- **Neglect**

This occurs where adults fail to meet the child's basic needs such as food or warm clothing, fail or refuse to give children love, affection and attention. Children might also be constantly left alone or unsupervised. Neglect could include not ensuring children are safe, exposing them to undue cold or to unnecessary risk of injury. **Neglect could occur during organised activities if young people are exposed to the risk of injury or there is a failure to ensure their safety.**

4.3 Effects of Abuse

Abuse in all its forms can affect a child at any age. The effects can be so damaging that, if untreated, they may follow an individual into adulthood. For example, an adult who has been abused as a child may find it difficult or impossible to maintain a stable, trusting relationship, become involved with drugs or prostitution, attempt suicide or even abuse a child in the future.

There have been a number of studies that suggest children with disabilities are 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 has occurred. Children from ethnic minorities who could also be experiencing racial discrimination may feel doubly powerless.

4.4 Bullying

Bullying is in effect another form of abuse and can be either physical, psychological or verbal in nature and is frequently undertaken by a young person. The competitive environment provided by the sports situation makes an excellent environment for the bully to ply his/her trade. In sports the bully can be

- A parent who pushes the child too hard
- A coach with a win at all costs attitude
- A player who intimidates
- An official placing unfair pressure on a person

Bullying can take many forms

- Physical: pushing, hitting etc
- Verbal: name calling, teasing, sarcasm
- Emotional: tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating
- Racist: taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact or abusive comments

There are various ways in which bullying show itself

- Behavioural changes such as reduced concentration, clingy, depressed, tearful, reluctance to attend training or club activities
- A reduction in the standard of play
- Physical signs such as headaches, stomach aches, difficulty in sleeping, damaged clothes
- A shortage of money or frequent loss of clothing

5.0 Good Practice

It IS possible to reduce situations where abuse may occur. The following are more specific examples of care which should be taken when working within a sports/leisure context with children or vulnerable adults:

5.1 You should:

- Always be publicly open when working with children or vulnerable adults. Avoid any situations where you and an individual are completely unobserved (encourage an open environment).
- Where possible, children should not be left unattended, however this will depend on age and circumstances.
- If any form of personal contact is required, it should be provided openly and according to National Governing Body (NGB) guidelines. Parents today are becoming increasingly sensitive about physical contact, so their concerns must be considered and an appropriate response taken to inform them of your actions.

- Where possible, parents should take on the responsibility for their children in the changing rooms. If groups have to be supervised in the changing rooms, ensure that you work in pairs, and do not enter changing rooms of the opposite sex.
- Where there are mixed groups, supervision, where possible, should be by a male **and** female member of staff.
- You must respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person and treat everyone equally within the context of their sport.
- You must place the well-being and safety of the performer above the development of performance.

5.2 You should never:

- Engage in rough, physical and sexually provocative games
- Share a bedroom with a child
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate contact
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child even in fun
- Allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
- Do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves
- Enter the changing rooms of the opposite sex
- Transport young people or vulnerable adults in your car whilst alone

Failure to follow these guidelines may well result in formal action under the University of Sussex disciplinary procedures

Occasions may arise where a member of staff does things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are young or have disabilities. These duties should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parents/carers and the children involved.

If a child is accidentally injured as a result of your actions, seems distressed in any manner, appears to be sexually aroused by your actions, misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done, such incidents should be reported as soon as possible to another colleague and a written report made. Parents and supervisors/managers should be informed of all incidents.

Everyone should be aware that it is **not good practice to:**

- Spend any time alone with children away from others. When talking to children on your own ensure you can be seen by others.
- Take children alone on car journeys, however short.

- Take children to your home where they will be alone with you.

If exceptionally any of these situations are expected to occur, plans on how to ensure the child is safe and sound must be made with your supervisor and enacted with the knowledge of the parents.

6.0 What to do if you have concerns

It is not your role to take individual responsibility for deciding whether or not child abuse is actually taking place. However, there is a responsibility to protect children by referring your concerns to the appropriate agency which is the local social services who can then make enquiries and take any necessary action. Social services will take responsibility for informing the police. Where there is an immediate need to protect the child from danger the police must be advised.

There should always be a commitment to work in partnership with parents or carers where there are concerns about their children. Therefore, in most situations it would be important to talk to parents or carers to help clarify any initial concerns. For example, if a child seems withdrawn, he/she may have experienced a family bereavement.

However, there are circumstances in which a child may be placed at even greater risk if such concerns were shared (e.g. where a parent or carer may be responsible for the abuse, or not able to respond to the situation appropriately). In such situations, or where concerns still exist, any suspicion, allegation or incident of abuse must be reported to the person in charge as soon as possible.

Once the incident/allegation has been reported it is the responsibility of the person in charge to inform the social services (see useful contacts) without delay. If the person in charge is not available, the person discovering or being informed of the abuse should immediately contact the social services, who will decide how and when parents/carers will be informed and ultimately become responsible for what steps to take next.

IT IS YOUR ROLE TO REPORT NOT TO JUDGE

6.1 What to do in responding to a child

Children who are being abused will only tell people they trust and with whom they feel safe. By listening to, and taking seriously what a child is telling you, you will already be helping to protect them.

Guidelines

- Create a safe environment by:
 - staying calm and not rushing into actions which may be inappropriate
 - confirming you know how difficult it must have been to confide in you and that they have done the right thing

- reassuring the child and stressing he/she is not to blame
- listening to what the child says. Show you are taking what is being said seriously
- where possible remain in view, do not go somewhere on your own.
- **Be honest** and **do not make promises you cannot keep**. Explain you will have to tell other people in order to stop what is happening.
- **Ensure you** are quite clear about what the child says so you can pass it on to child protection professionals. Use open questions to encourage the child to use their own words but **do not** press for detailed information **NB** The law is very strict and a child abuse case can be dismissed if it appears the child has been led or words have been suggested.
- **Record** exactly what the child has said to you, in a legible and accurate format, as soon as possible after the incident. As far as possible use the child's own words. Stick to the facts and do not give your opinion.(an incident report form is available for this)
 - the child's name, address, date of birth
 - the nature of the allegation
 - a description of any visible bruising or other injuries
 - your observations (e.g. a description of the child's behaviour and physical and emotional state)
 - exactly what the child said and what you said. Record the child's account of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred
 - any action you took as a result of your concerns (e.g. who you spoke to and resulting action, including any contact with parents, managers or social services). Include names, addresses and telephone numbers
 - sign and date what you have recorded
 - store the information in accordance with relevant procedures
- Do not take sole responsibility - consult someone else (e.g. a senior colleague or someone you can trust) as soon as possible so you can begin to protect the child and gain some support for yourself.

NB: In determining your actions, remember that only experienced and specifically qualified and trained professionals should deal with cases or suspicions relating to child abuse.

6.2 Dealing with Allegations against Staff/Volunteers

Should a member of staff become aware of an allegation (against a colleague) of an incident of child abuse taking, or having taken place, it is vital that the following procedures are followed:

- Take the allegation seriously. It is your duty to consider any allegation to be potentially dangerous to the child and therefore report it.
- Make a written record of any details of which you are aware, as part of your report.
- Report the allegation to a more senior member of staff, giving details of the allegation, how you became aware of it and any other relevant details. In a case where the senior member of staff may be involved, report to another senior colleague or staff member you can trust.
- Do not judge or investigate. As an employee or volunteer it is important not to lose focus of your role. By reporting an allegation quickly, any necessary investigations and/or judgement can then be made by trained professionals.
- Maintain confidentiality. It is extremely important that any allegations are not discussed (unless absolutely necessary) as any breaches could be damaging to both the child and to any investigation that may follow.
- Any requests for information from members of the public (including parents) or the media should be directed to a designated member of staff and should be given the 'no comment' response.

6.3 Confidentiality

When dealing with any case/suspicion/allegation relating to child abuse, you must be made aware that any breaches in confidentiality can be very damaging to the child, family and any child protection investigations which may take place.

It is important that the rights of both the victim and the **alleged** perpetrator are protected by ensuring that only those who **need to know** are given the relevant information.

This will mean, at the very least, informing:

- Your supervisor or other responsible person
- Head of Sport
- The local social services team
- The parents of the child (only if social services ask for this to be done)

Informing the parents of a child about whom you are concerned will be handled in a sensitive way and only undertaken in consultation with the local social services.

Depending upon the outcome of initial inquiries, staff and other agencies who have contact with either the child concerned or the alleged perpetrator may need to be

given brief details of the incident and subsequent action. The statutory agency will provide advice as to who should be told, when they should be told, and the kind of information which it is appropriate to share.

6.4 Dealing with the Media

Within Sussexsport the Public Relations contact is:

Press Officer Tel: 01273 678888

This is the only person who may deal with the media in these cases.

6.5 Off Duty Contact between Staff and Children

Members of staff must maintain a professional relationship with children during any off-duty contact, continuing to follow the guidelines and policies set out for working contact.

Staff should be particularly careful to limit and, if possible, eliminate any one-to-one contact. This should also include driving children to and from coaching/club sessions. Where an arrangement is made in an emergency, it is important to ensure there is a second adult in the vehicle.

6.6 Guidelines on Photography and Use of Video

Sussexsport recognises that photographs of Children and Young People can pose direct or indirect risks to their subjects. For example, an individual may use images accompanied by personal information to learn more about a Child or Young Person prior to 'grooming' them for abuse. Or the content of a photograph featured on a website could be used or adapted for inappropriate use. This kind of adapted material has appeared on child pornography sites.

There is also evidence that certain individuals will visit sporting events to take photographs or video footage of young and disabled sports participants for inappropriate use.

Sussexsport is keen to promote positive images of all guests including Children and Young People playing sport or participating in activities and is not banning the use of photographic or videoing equipment. The following guidelines apply to use of photography and video to regulate the taking of and publication of photographs and video footage:

Sussexsport will:

- Think carefully before using any images showing children and young people on our website, social media or other publications
- Choose images that present the activity in a positive light, and promote the best aspects of the sport and organisation
- Respect all guests at our facilities. If any guest complains or expresses concern, the photographer/ film maker will be asked to stop taking photographs and filming immediately and consult with the relevant Duty Manager.
- Not allow images to be taken of or published of any third parties without their agreement.

- Always ask parents/guardians/carers to give their permission for photographs and/or video footage of their child(ren) to be taken and used to ensure that they are aware of the way the image will be used to represent Sussexsport or sport.
- Ask for the Young Person's permission to use his/her image to ensure that he/she is aware of the way the image will be used to represent Sussexsport or sport.
- Avoid using a photograph of a young person named in accompanying text unless it's considered necessary (e.g. for elite athletes), it's in the child's best interests and the child/parent have consented.
- Only use images of Young People in appropriate dress or kit, including safety wear, to reduce the risk of inappropriate use and to provide positive images of the Young Person at our facilities.
- Encourage the reporting of inappropriate use of images of Young People. If you are concerned, report your concerns to Luke Terrill, Deputy Head of Sport.
- Provide coaches who use images of athletes as part of their training with clear guidelines by which they are required to comply, including: use of the images, consents, and retention, safe storage and confidentiality

Sussexsport will avoid using any personal equipment to take photos and recordings of children – use only cameras or devices belonging to Sussexsport.

6.7 Use of Electronic Communication and Social media

Contacting children and young people by telephone, text or email should never be undertaken without parental knowledge or consent. Ideally contact by coaches or staff members would be primarily on a face-to-face basis and parent/guardian email addresses are collected at time of booking.

However, if it necessary to make contact with young people by text messaging or emailing: for children under 11 all mobile phone communication and emails should be made with parents or carers. For children and young people of 11 and over, it is acceptable to send text messages or emails but the messages should also be sent to parents. Messages could also be copied to a responsible person within Sussexsport.

Sussexsport will keep any details of phone numbers and email addresses securely.

Sussexsport online and social media services are managed by the Marketing coordinator who will vet and manage the services by regularly checking interactive services (e.g. Facebook and Twitter) for inappropriate content and by restricting editing access to the marketing team and senior managers only. our procedures remain up to date and that good practice is promoted.

Sussexsport recognises the use of online social media and other online services has become a very significant part of life for many people. There have however been occurrences where these services have been used for less positive reasons and Sussexsport has a policy on the use of social networking sites and the following guidelines apply to all staff, volunteers, coaches, officials/referees, or anyone working on behalf of the organisation who is using digital technology such as social media sites (e.g. Twitter and Facebook), apps, mobile phones, game consoles and the internet:

- Adhere to relevant legislation and good practice guidelines
- Behave responsibly in terms of the content you access and how you go about your use of social media.

- Internet and social media is potentially visible to everyone in the online world and any issues involving your behaviour may be addressed by your line manager
- Do not deliberately create, browse or access material that could be considered offensive or illegal. If you accidentally come across any such material, you must report this to your line manager
- Social media or the internet will not be used to send anyone material that could be considered threatening, offensive, upsetting, bullying or illegal
- Do not give out your personal information or the personal information of staff and guests of Sussexsport such as name, age, address or telephone number online
- Staff will not share their passwords with anyone else.
- Do not meet anyone that you have met online unless accompanied by a member of staff

6.8 Events and 3rd Party hirers

The club or hirer takes responsibility for the safety and welfare of young people and vulnerable adults within their group. They must complete documentation required as of Sussexsport and provide details of their Safeguarding Officers.

- The hirers are responsible for administering the drop off and collection at Sussexsport facilities.
- The hirer will remain responsible for any uncollected young persons who were due to be collected by a parent/guardian/nominated adult.
- Young people will be the responsibility of the coach or instructor for the duration of the activity.
- The hirer will ensure that all participants under the age of 12 years are supervised at all times during the activity within their sports ratios. This includes visiting the toilets, water fountains, or vending machines when they will be accompanied by a coach.
- If there is a believed threat to an individual, action will be taken and concerns will be passed onto the Deputy Head of Sport. All incidences will be reported and there be a need to communicate with the safeguarding officer of the club or school involved. This will then discussed with the Safeguarding Leads who will take appropriate action.

6.9 Managing Challenging Behaviour

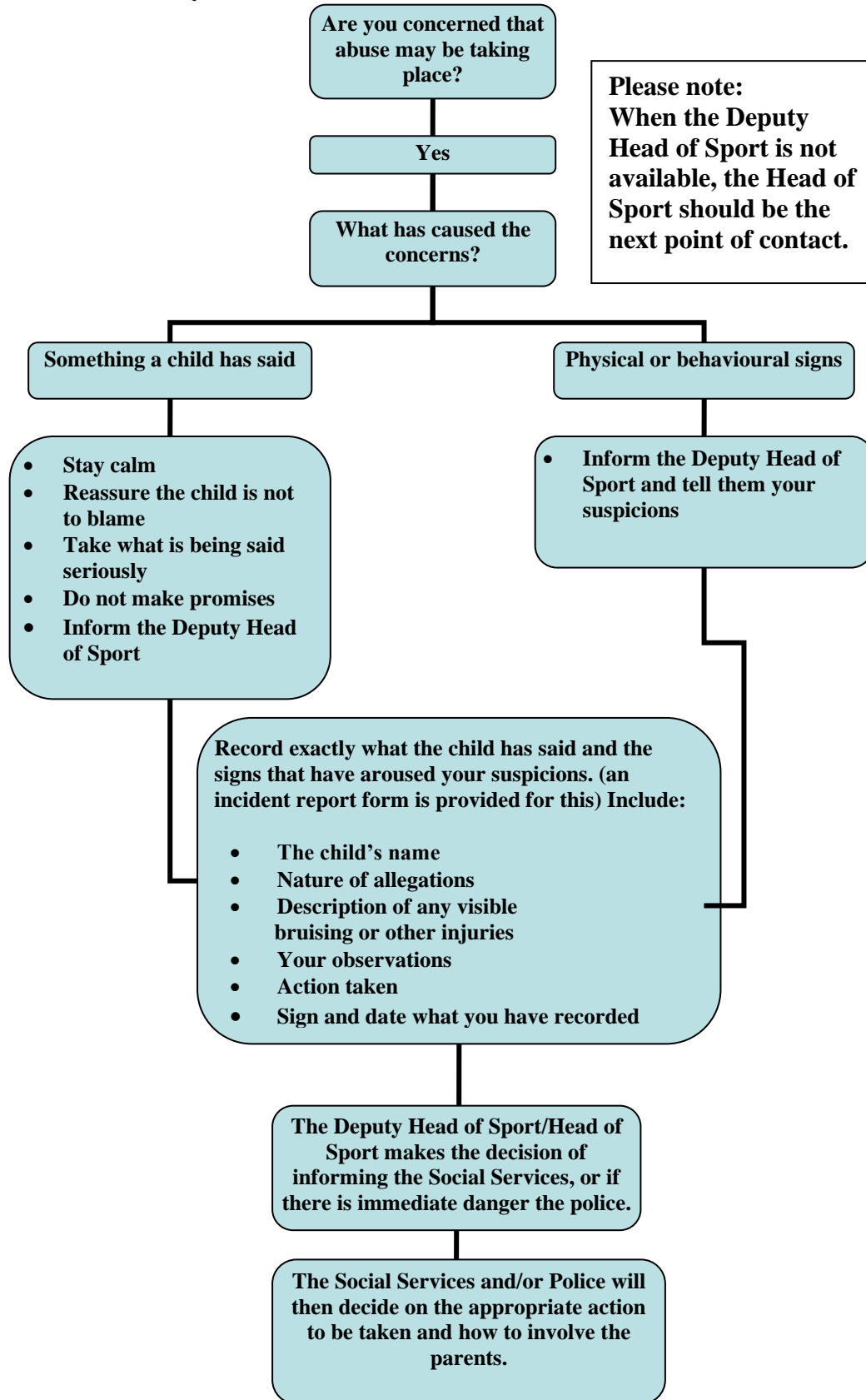
Staff/volunteers who deliver sports activities to children may, on occasions, be required to deal with a child's challenging behaviour. Sussexsport promotes good practice for managing challenging behaviour based on the following principles:

- The welfare of the child is the paramount consideration.
- Children must never be subject to any form of treatment that is harmful, abusive, humiliating or degrading.
- The specific needs a child may have (e.g. communication, behaviour management, comprehension and so on) should be discussed with their parent/carer and where

appropriate the child, before activities start. Where appropriate it may be helpful to record the details of any agreed plan or approach and provide copies to all parties.

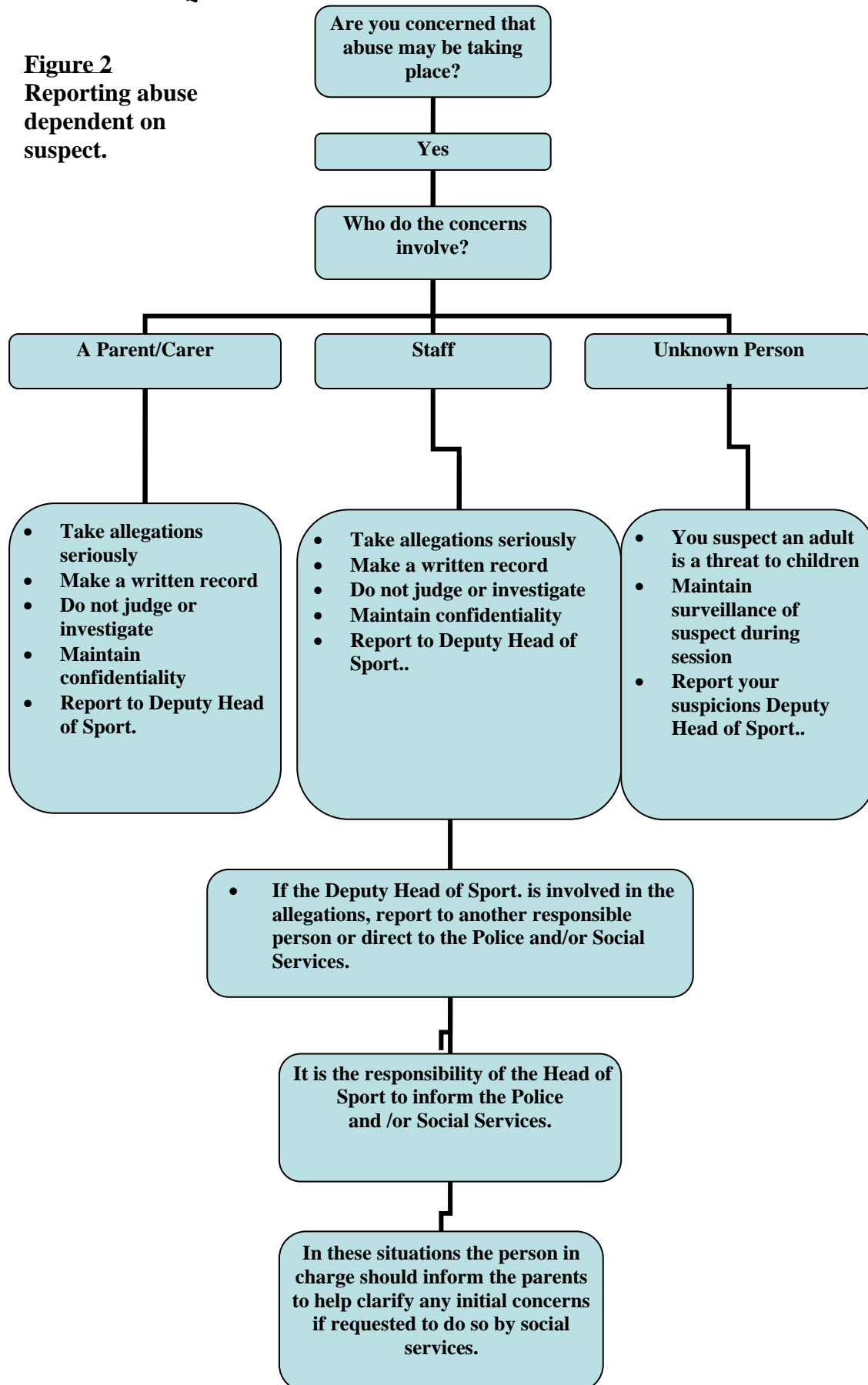
- Every child should be supported to participate. Consideration to exclude a child from activities should apply only as a last resort and after all efforts to address any challenge have been exhausted, in exceptional circumstances where the safety of that child or of other children cannot be maintained.

APPENDIX A: Quick Guide 1



APPENDIX B: Quick Guide 2

Figure 2
Reporting abuse
dependent on
suspect.



APPENDIX C: Incident Report Form



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Child Protection and Safeguarding Incident Report Form

Date

Venue

Time

Name of Child/Vulnerable Adult

DOB

Address

..... Post Code Tel/Mobile No

Next of Kin

Address (If different from above)

..... Post Code Tel/Mobile No

Person expressing the concern

Address

..... Post Code Tel/Mobile No

Nature of Concern.....
.....
.....

What has prompted the concerns? (physical, behavioural, other)
.....
.....
.....

Has the child been spoken to?.....
If yes, who by?.....

What was said to the child and what did the child say?.....
.....
.....

Is there an alleged abuser?
Who is this?.....

Has this person been approached?
Has anyone else been consulted?
Name of reporting person

Signature
.....
.....

Date:
.....
.....

This form must now be passed to the Deputy Head of Sport., Sussexsport, University of Sussex, Falmer, Brighton, BN1 9RB.

DECLARATION

Sussexsport is fully committed to safeguarding the well-being of children by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional harm.

As an employee of the University of Sussex it is therefore important that you have taken the time to thoroughly read the Child Protection Policy. By being made aware of the policy, it is our intention to ensure that **all** employees are pro-active in providing a safe environment for the young people in their care. Any disciplinary measures required as a result of this policy will be dealt with in accordance with normal disciplinary procedures. Copies of which are available from the Personnel department.

.....

Employee Declaration

I have read and fully understood the Child Protection Policy, and hereby declare that I will carry out my role in line with policy statements and procedures contained therein.

Signed Date