

MicroSports

CLUBS SCHOOLS CAMPS MANAGEMENT

1. Purpose & Scope

Microsports is committed to maintaining a culture of safety in which children are protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation, harm, and radicalisation. This policy sets out how we fulfil our duty to safeguard children and young people, respond to concerns, and coordinate with external agencies.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, contractors, sessional workers, and anyone involved in our activities with children.

This policy is aligned with statutory guidance including *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023* GOV.UK+1 and *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025* (for relevant contexts) GOV.UK+2, NSPCC Learning+2, and reflects current practice in safeguarding, including online safety, Prevent, and multi-agency working.

This edition includes sports-specific safeguarding guidance relevant to Microsports' environment, including changing rooms, mixed-age sessions, third-party contractors, and digital communications.

2. Roles & Responsibilities

Designated Child Protection Officer (CPO): Paul Bayliss

Deputy / On-call CPO: Michael Hampson

- While sessions are running, a designated CPO (or deputy) must always be present or on-call to receive concerns, coordinate responses, and liaise with external agencies.
 - All staff and volunteers share responsibility for safeguarding and must respond appropriately to concerns, disclosures, or incidents.
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3. Safeguarding Definitions & Scope

Safeguarding is the overarching responsibility to protect children from harm, to promote their welfare, and to ensure safe environments (including online) in which they can thrive.

Abuse, neglect, and exploitation include, but are not limited to:

- Physical, emotional, or sexual abuse
- Neglect (persistent failure to meet basic needs)

- Online/digital abuse, grooming, exploitation
- Peer-on-peer abuse (bullying, sexual harassment, initiation/hazing, sexting)
- Radicalisation/extremist influence/exploitation

Sports-specific contexts:

- Supervision in changing rooms, showers, and communal sports areas
- Mixed-age group dynamics where adults and children share courts or sessions
- Interactions with third-party contractors, cleaners, and maintenance staff

The policy covers any concerns about harm to a child, including those occurring outside our setting or online.

4. Recognising Signs & Indicators

Staff should be alert to signs that may suggest abuse, neglect, or exploitation, including:

- Changes in behaviour, mood, academic/participation decline
- Unexplained bruises, marks, or injuries (including those possibly caused during sports activities)
- Disclosures or statements from a child which cause concern
- Withdrawal, self-harm, suicidal behaviours
- Excessive secrecy, reluctance to go home, frequent absences
- Online behaviours: secretive device use, receiving or sharing harmful content, exposure to extremist or conspiracy content
- Peer-on-peer harm (sexual harassment, coercive behaviour, bullying)
- Radicalisation indicators: changes in behaviour, justifying violence, sudden interest in extremist ideology

Sports-specific indicators:

- Reluctance to attend sessions, changing rooms, or mixed-age activities
- Hesitation around certain staff, contractors, or volunteers
- Distress during video review sessions, photo/video activities, or use of sports apps

5. Responding to Disclosures & Concerns

When a child makes a disclosure or concern arises:

- Reassure them, listen without leading or questioning, avoid promises of confidentiality (explain you must share the concern properly)
- Use age-appropriate language so the child understands what will happen next
- Record the concern/disclosure as soon as possible in writing (see Section 6)
- Report immediately to the CPO or Deputy
- If the child is in immediate danger, contact emergency services (999)
- If the alleged perpetrator is present, ensure the child is moved to safety without placing others at risk

Sports-specific considerations:

- Ensure privacy in changing rooms and showers; remove child from situation safely
- For mixed-age sessions, separate children and adults immediately if a concern arises

6. Logging Concerns / Record-Keeping

All concerns, disclosures, observations, or radicalisation-related suspicions must be recorded formally. Records should include:

- Child's name, date of birth, contact details
- Date and time of incident/disclosure/observation
- Date and time the record was made
- Names/roles of those present or involved
- Factual, objective description (use child's own words where applicable)
- Any injuries, digital evidence (screenshots, URLs, chat logs, sports video footage)
- Action taken and rationale
- Signature, name, and role of person making the record

Records must be treated confidentially, stored securely, and access restricted to those with safeguarding responsibilities. Regular audits of records should be conducted by senior leadership.

7. Referral & Liaison with External Agencies

The CPO will decide whether to refer to Children's Social Care/local authority safeguarding/child protection services.

- Referrals must be made immediately where there is a suspicion of significant harm.
- The CPO should follow up in writing within 48 hours of the referral.
- Staff should escalate concerns directly to the local authority if they believe the concern has not been addressed appropriately.

For concerns relating to radicalisation/Prevent:

- The CPO liaises with the Local Authority Prevent Co-ordinator/Channel
- For serious cases, the CPO or staff may contact police on 101 (or 999 in emergencies) or the anti-terrorism hotline

All inter-agency working must comply with local Safeguarding Children Partnership protocols and information-sharing agreements.

8. Allegations Against Staff / Volunteers

If an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer:

- Record the allegation/concern in detail
- Secure any evidence, obtain witness statements, avoid influencing recollection
- Report immediately to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and to Ofsted (as applicable)
- Follow LADO guidance regarding suspension, investigation, or referral to police
- Consider referral to the DBS if the person is removed from regulated activity
- Ensure procedural fairness, support for all involved, and that the accused does not have unsupervised access to children during the investigation

Sports-specific guidance:

- Ensure contractors, coaches, or volunteers do not supervise changing rooms, showers, or private areas without a vetted adult present

9. Safer Recruitment, Training & Awareness

- All recruitment must follow safe recruitment practices: identity checks, references, DBS, overseas checks (where relevant)
- Safeguarding induction training must be completed before any staff or volunteer works with children

- All staff/volunteers must receive refresher safeguarding training at least every 12 months (including Prevent)
- CPO/Deputy should receive advanced safeguarding/Prevent training every 2–3 years
- Safeguarding must be a permanent agenda item in supervision, team meetings, and appraisals
- A whistleblowing policy should exist and be known to all staff
- Staff should affirm by signature that they have read, understood, and will comply with this policy

Sports-specific guidance:

- Third-party contractors, cleaners, or maintenance staff who may have unsupervised access to children must be DBS-checked or accompanied by a staff member at all times

10. Online Safety, Photography & Mobile Devices

- A separate Digital/E-Safety Policy should be maintained
- Staff or authorised persons may take photos/videos of children only with explicit parental consent, and use/retention must comply with data protection rules
- Children and visitors should not use personal devices to take photographs during sessions
- Use of social media by staff must follow guidance (professional boundaries, privacy settings)
- Where livestreaming, video calls, or remote sessions occur, strict protocols must apply

Sports-specific guidance:

- Communication with young athletes via WhatsApp, social media, or booking apps must include at least one parent or be visible in group chats for transparency
- Use of sports video analysis tools, GoPros, or match footage requires parental consent and strict data retention limits; footage should be stored securely and deleted after agreed retention periods

11. Attendance, Children Missing Education & Alternative Provision

- Persistent absence or unexplained absences must be followed up
- Liaison with children's services should occur where absences may mask neglect or other risk

- Ensure alternative provision meets safeguarding standards

12. Governance, Review & Policy Maintenance

- Policy adopted by Microsports, signed by senior leadership
- Date of adoption (2025): 20th October 2025
- Review date: September 2028 (or earlier if legislation/guidance changes)
- Policy reviewed at least annually and whenever relevant statutory or safeguarding guidance is updated
- All staff, volunteers, and stakeholders must receive a copy and confirm they have read, understood, and will adhere to it

13. Contact Information

Role / Service	Contact Details
Local Authority Children’s Social Care / Safeguarding	0121 303 1888
Children’s Social Care (Out-of-hours)	0121 675 4806
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	0121 675 1669
Local Safeguarding Children Partnership / Safeguarding Partners	-----
Local Authority Prevent Co-ordinator / Channel	0121 303 9905
Police (non-emergency)	101
Police (emergency)	999
Anti-terrorism Hotline	0800 789 321
NSPCC Helpline / Childline	0808 800 5000 / 0800 1111
Ofsted (or relevant regulator)	0300 123 1231

