SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTING CHILDREN POLICY AND PROCEDURES

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# **GLOSSARY**

**Term Definition/explanation**

Abuse See Appendix 1.

Child(ren) Anyone under the age of 18.

Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) The CPSU team is sited within the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC).

Children’s Social Care Services The Local Authority statutory agency with responsibility for safeguarding and protecting children and families, formerly known as Social Services. (the name may vary around the country).

Criminal records checks A service carried by a government agency that checks the criminal record history of a potential employee or volunteer who will be working in a Regulated Activity that includes close or regular contact with children or adults at risk, on behalf of organisations and recruiters throughout the United Kingdom. In England and Wales this agency is the Disclosure and Barring Service in Scotland it is called Disclosure Scotland, and in Northern Ireland checks are made through AccessNI.

Disclosure The information contained on a certificate, or otherwise, issued by one of the Criminal Records Checking agencies (see above). The word is sometimes used when a child has said something concerning or made an allegation or shown concerning behaviours.

Duty of Care The duty that rests upon an individual or organisation to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure the safety of any person involved in an activity for which that individual or organisation is responsible.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) In England and Wales. Primary role to help employers make safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups including children. The DBS was established under the protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and merges the functions previously carried out by the Criminal Records Bureau and Independent Safeguarding Authority.

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) The Local Authority Designated Officer,(LADO) works within Children’s Services and should be alerted to all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child, possibly committed a criminal offence against children, or related to a child or behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children. They will provide advice, guidance and help to determine whether the allegation sits within the scope of the procedures.
The DO helps co-ordinate information-sharing with the right people and will also monitor and track any investigation, with the aim to resolve it as quickly as possible.

*In Loco Parentis* The additional obligation on a coach, or other individual with responsibility for children, to act as a ‘reasonable parent’ would be expected to act.

Lower-level concern The term lower-level concerns can be used to describe issues or behaviours that do not meet the threshold for significant harm but may be inappropriate or inconsistent with code of conduct expectations, organisational values and/or professional standards. These concerns may not be seen as immediately dangerous but still warrant attention to ensure they don't escalate, become normalised or lead to harm in the future.

Multi- Agency Safeguarding Arrangements “safeguarding partners” (local authorities, chief officers of police, and clinical commissioning groups) must make arrangements to work together with relevant agencies (as they consider appropriate) to safeguard and protect the welfare of children in the area. Sports organisations may be called upon to join safeguarding partners in their formal arrangements, and if so are required to comply.

**ParalympicsGB** The trading and brand name of the British Paralympic Association (BPA). The National Paralympic Committee recognised by the International Paralympic Committee and responsible for the selection and organisation of the Great Britain and Northern Ireland Team for the summer and winter Paralympic Games.

ParalympicsGB Team is the British Team at the Summer and Winter Paralympics Games selected by ParalympicsGB and signed a Team Members or Associate Team Members Agreement.

Parent A generic term that includes parents, carers and guardians.

Personnel Employees, volunteers and anyone acting on behalf of ParalympicsGB and its members (including consultants), or those employed by facilities used for ParalympicsGB events and camps as well as volunteers and all participants in the Paralympic sports.

Position of Trust Position of trust is a legal term that refers to certain roles and settings where an adult is in a position of authority or responsibility and can have a considerable amount of power and influence on a young person’s life. Examples include: coaches, mentors or another adult a young person depends upon for their sporting development, success or position in a team. It is now against the law in England and Wales for someone in a position of trust within sport organisations to engage in sexual activity with a child in their care, even if that child is over the age of consent (16 or over). ParalympicsGB (along with NGBs) has Games-time codes of conduct and linked disciplinary processes that support the maintenance of healthy and positive relationships between sports personnel and young people. The code of conduct references the definition of roles that constitute positions of trust and states that, in line with the law in England and Wales, any sexual relationships/activity between adults in those roles and 16 - 17 year olds for whom they are in a position of authority constitutes an offence.

**National Governing Body (NGB)** The organisation recognised by the International Federation for each sport as the body that selects British or UK teams for international competition.

Regulated Activity Regulated Activity is work that a barred person must not do. Regulated Activity involves:
Teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children;
OR
Providing guidance/advice on well-being;
OR
Driving a vehicle only for children
AND
Happens frequently (once a week or more often)
OR
Happens intensively (on 3 or more days in a 30-day period, or overnight)
AND
The individual carrying out the activity of teaching, training or instructing is unsupervised

Regulated Activity Provider The person or organisation responsible for employing or deploying workers to facilitate an activity, whether these workers are paid or unpaid.

Risk Assessment A procedure to help identify possible sources of harm and take appropriate action to minimise these risks taking into account the age, number, the nature of the activity and competence of participants.

Safeguarding Officer (LSO or DSO) ParalympicsGB has appointed a Lead Safeguarding Officer (LSO) from its staff whose responsibilities are set out in section 4.1. At each ParalympicsGB event a designated officer(s) (DSO) will be appointed for the period of that event, their responsibilities are set out in section 4.2.

Welfare of the Child is paramount Key principle of the *Children Act 1989*. It is to the principle that the safety and welfare of children must be the primary consideration in any proceedings involving children.

# Introduction

Every organisation that provides services for children and young people (anyone under the age of 18) has a part to play in safeguarding and promoting their welfare. The key elements to safeguarding include:

* The protection of children from abuse and neglect;
* The promotion of practices that contribute to children’s safety, health and wellbeing; and
* Ensuring a safe and effective environment for young people.

ParalympicsGB is the National Paralympic Committee for Great Britain and Northern Ireland. It has the sole mandate in this country from the International Paralympic Committee to select and enter a team for the Summer and Winter Paralympic Games.

ParalympicsGB is a membership body, through the National Paralympic Committee, which currently comprises of representatives from National Governing Bodies of Sport, the Home Country Disability Sport Federations and National Disability Sport Organisations, as well as various individuals.

ParalympicsGB has two long-term strategic objectives:

1. The continued success of ParalympicsGB at the Summer and Winter Paralympic Games, ensuring that the UK remains a world-leader in Paralympic sport. This is fundamental to our mandated role as the National Paralympic Committee for Great Britain and Northern Ireland and to our ability to bring about positive social change. It is through the performances of our elite athletes that attitudes will shift and change can happen.
2. An ambition for Social Impact. We will continue to use the positive power of the Paralympics and of our Paralympians to inspire a change in attitudes to disability. Our long-term focus will enable us to build upon this foundation to deliver real and sustainable change in the lives of disabled people across the UK.

In order to fulfil these strategic objectives some of the core responsibilities include, but are not limited to the selection, management and delivery of the ParalympicsGB team for each Paralympic Games, the provision of world class performance services and advice in support of NGB led programmes, including consideration of Games preparation strategies, multi-sport camps and sport events as well as engagement in targeted programmes for athlete identification and pathway development, in support of NGB and other partner activity as appropriate.

The strategic objectives can only be widely achieved where children are safe and protected from harm. ParalympicsGB acknowledges that its membership, and those accessing services, include young people with disabilities, from ethnically diverse backgrounds, gender, and the LGBT+ population. These identities, and how they intersect, can in turn can cause these young people to be additionally vulnerable, and may cause them to be targeted by those wishing to abuse. Communication difficulties, isolation, a dependency on others and other factors may contribute to increasing risks to a disabled child’s safety and welfare, and impact on their ability to access help and support. Care will be taken to ensure that individual needs are recognised and assessed, and appropriate additional safeguards are put in place.

Although the majority of children have a fulfilling experience in sport, some young people may experience abuse and/or poor practice linked to their participation. While experience of harm occurs at every level of sport, research shows that vulnerability to abuse and poor practice increases as young athletes make progress through the competitive ranks.[[1]](#footnote-2)

It is vital that anyone involved in sports provision for children is alert to:

* Possible indicators of abuse and neglect.
* Risks that individual abusers or potential abusers, may pose to children; and
* Understanding what actions, they should take should concerns arise.

This is particularly important in light of ParalympicsGB’s unique remit to select and enter athletes at elite level. In addition, the membership may have direct contact with children through the programmes delivered by ParalympicsGB.

ParalympicsGB safeguarding and protecting children policy applies to all individuals involved inParalympicsGB. ParalympicsGB will encourage and support partner organisations, including clubs, counties, suppliers, and sponsors to adopt and demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practice of equality as set out in this safeguarding and protecting children policy.

The aim of this policy to is to set context, commitment, principles, scope and core practice guidelines for any ParalympicsGB work or events that may have children in attendance. (A separate policy has been written to safeguard adults that ParalympicsGB may come into contact with and can be found on our website www.paralympics.org.uk). These events include but are not limited to Paralympic Potential Days, Preparation Camps, Paralympic Inspiration Programme and the Great Britain and Northern Ireland team at the Paralympic Games.

At all ParalympicsGB events a welfare plan will be written that shows how this policy is translated into practical action specifically for that event or context. Welfare plans will show how every aspect of the welfare plan will be implemented. All staff/volunteers/participants will be required to read the Welfare Plan carefully and fulfil their respective responsibilities. Individuals will be required to sign up to codes of conduct/behaviour/team agreement.

ParalympicsGB recognises its responsibility to work in partnership with other partners and statutory bodies in the event of a concern arising relating to a child. ParalympicsGB expects that all NGBs will have their own policies covering safeguarding and welfare and whilst this policy does not seek to replace the policies and procedures for individual sports, ParalympicsGB expects participating sports to operate within the guidelines contained within this policy, and the specific event welfare plan, during ParalympicsGB events and camps and whilst competing under the ParalympicsGB team.

## **1.1 Scope**

These policies are written in accordance with Government guidance documented in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023.

These policies apply to all athletes, personnel, assistants, coaches and anyone involved in ParalympicsGB organised activity, event or team. All these people have a duty of care to safeguard the welfare of children and prevent abuse.

## **1.2 Why these policies are needed**

Abuse can occur in many situations including the home, school and the sporting environment. We know that some individuals will actively seek access to children through sport in order to harm them.

## **1.3 Policy statement**

ParalympicsGB acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice and UK Sport requirements.

The policy recognises that the welfare and interests of children are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that regardless of age, ability or disability, sex, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, socio-economic background, all children

* have a positive and enjoyable experience of sport at ParalympicsGB in a safe and child centred environment.
* are protected from abuse whilst participating in Paralympic sport or outside of the activity.

ParalympicsGB acknowledges that some children, 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.

As part of our safeguarding policy ParalympicsGB 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 policy and procedures will be widely promoted and are mandatory for everyone involved in ParalympicsGB. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.

**Monitoring**

As part of the funding agreement with UK Sport, ParalympicsGB is required to maintain and embed the CPSU’s Advanced Standards for safeguarding children and young people and hold annual review meetings with the CPSU and UK Sport to ensure ParalympicsGB’s safeguarding practices are updated in line with changes to guidance.

The policy will be reviewed a year after development and then every three years, or in the following circumstances:

* changes in legislation and/or government guidance.
* as required by the Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements, UK Sport and the CPSU.
* as a result of any other significant change or event.

# **2.0 Symptoms of abuse and the promotion of good practice**

## **2.1 Introduction**

Although abuse often takes place in the home environment, the abuse of children occurs in a wide range of settings. Children are most commonly abused by an adult who is well known to them, and who holds a position of trust (see Appendix 1 for definition and further information), though rarely abuse may be carried out by individuals with no prior relationship with the child.

The impact for a child who is subjected to abuse can be devastating and life-long, especially if the individual has felt unable to disclose the abuse, their disclosure was ignored, or they were unable to access support.

There are four main types of abuse, namely physical, sexual, emotional and neglect (see Appendix 1 for definitions.) A study of the experiences of children participating in organised sport in the UK highlighted that peers were the most common perpetrators of all forms of harm reported. Coaches were identified as the second most common perpetrators of harm. This increased as young athletes advanced through the competitive ranks and in the case of physical abuse, at elite level, coaches overtook peers as the main perpetrators.[[2]](#footnote-3)

Anyone in regular contact with young people has the potential to play an important role in identifying cases where a child may be at risk. Although, not always easy to recognise, in some cases there may be signs and symptoms that children or young person has or is being abused (see Appendix 1 for information on indicators of abuse).

There are some behaviours or practices beyond these definitions of abuse that can significantly harm children. These include bullying, including cyber bullying and poor practice. There is also considerable evidence to suggest that some children may be additionally vulnerable to abuse and face extra barriers to getting help, because of their disability, race, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, social background or culture (see Appendix 1 for additional information).

## **2.2 Good practice**

By promoting and adopting good practice at all times, it is possible to reduce situations where abuse of children and poor practice may occur. All ParalympicsGB staff, members and volunteers are required to apply the following guidance when working with children:

* Treat everyone fairly and with respect and dignity;
* Do not discriminate against or show favouritism towards a specific child;
* Be open and transparent in working practices;
* Maintain high standards of conduct, providing a positive example for children;
* Establish and maintain clear and appropriate professional boundaries – re abuse of position of trust;
* Accurately represent professional status and do not abuse your position;
* Avoid physical contact unless it is as part of accepted professional practice or is necessary and reasonable to ensure the safety and/or wellbeing of a child;
* Comply with ParalympicsGB safeguarding children and young people policy and the appropriate NGB policy and codes of conduct relevant to the activity; and
* Ensure safeguarding concerns are reported in line with the ParalympicsGB policy.

See Appendix 1 for more information on good and poor practice when working with children.

# 3.0 Responding to concerns and allegations of poor practice & abuse

## **3.1 Introduction**

Although most cases of child abuse take place within the family setting, abuse can and does occur in sport.

All incidents of abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Abuse is:

* Any action by another person that causes significant harm to a child.
* When someone fails to prevent harm to a child.

The abuser may be:

* A member of the child’s family, a stranger, an acquaintance or an institution.
* An adult or a child.
* Peer on peer abuse.
* Male or female.
* Anyone.

It is essential that all concerns are taken seriously and appropriate action is taken. It is not your responsibility to decide if child abuse is taking place. It is your responsibility to report your concerns to the appropriate agencies (see below). You should seek help by either contacting the LSO at ParalympicsGB, your NGB or the CPSU. Not acting is not an option.

## **3.2 Receiving evidence of possible abuse/poor practice happening either inside or outside of sport**

You may have concerns about abuse or poor practice because:

* you see it happening.
* you recognise signs such as those listed in Appendix 1.
* someone reports it to you.
* a child approaches you directly.

If a child says or indicates that they are being abused, or you have concerns about their welfare you should:

* react calmly so as not to frighten them.
* tell them they are not to blame and that it was right to speak up.
* take what they say seriously.
* recognise that there may be inherent difficulties in interpreting what is said by someone who has a speech disability and/or differences in language.
* keep questions to the absolute minimum necessary so that there is a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said.
* reassure them, but do not promise to keep the matter secret – explain that to resolve the problem it will be necessary to inform other people as appropriate.
* the safety of the child is paramount - if the child needs urgent medical attention call an ambulance, inform the doctors of the concern and ensure they are made aware that this is a child protection issue.
* record all information.
* report in accordance with ParalympicsGB’s procedures as set out in the flowcharts in Appendices 4 to 8.

## **3.3 Lower-level concerns**

The term lower-level concerns can be used to describe issues or behaviours that do not meet the threshold for significant harm but may be inappropriate or inconsistent with code of conduct expectations, organisational values and/or professional standards. These concerns may not be seen as immediately dangerous or intentionally harmful but still warrant attention to ensure they don't escalate, become normalised or lead to harm in the future. Lower-level concerns often fall under the category of poor practice and may include inappropriate behaviour. Addressing lower-level concerns early and proactively helps to uphold safeguarding standards and ensures the safety and well-being of individuals.

This includes inappropriate behaviour outside of work, volunteering or being an athlete. A lower-level concern is any concern, doubt or sense of unease, no matter how small, that someone may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with ParalympicsGB’s values and Team Members Agreement.

It is essential that those involved in sport and physical activities understand that all concerns need to be challenged as soon as possible to correct the behaviour and educate individuals.

The risk of an organisation not receiving reports of poor practice or failing to manage them appropriately is that lower-level concerns cannot be addressed as soon as possible. This can adversely impact on those involved and can allow a situation to escalate.

See section 3.6 of this policy for how to report lower-level concerns.

Flowcharts for reporting concerns can be found in Appendices 5 to 8.

All concerns should be recorded on the Safeguarding and Welfare Incident Report (Appendix 9) and passed to the ParalympicsGB LSO or DSO.

## **3.4 Virtual events and activity**

More events and activities, such as online workshops and training, are now delivered virtually. Safeguarding should be at the forefront of planning and delivering any virtual activity in the same way as it would be for face-to-face activity.

Any ParalympicsGB staff or external staff delivering virtual activity should:

* Ensure delivery of virtual events and activities is done through an organisational account, never through personal accounts.
* Consider who can access the link and how to manage people logging in, being mindful if anyone unknown tries to join .
* Have more than one adult involved in the facilitation.
* Ensure the environment in the which the virtual activity is taking place is appropriate (for example not in a bedroom) and that other family members or people should not be in view and anything that provides personal or identifying information should be out of sight.
* Make sure private email inboxes and other screens are closed before sharing your screen.
* If a child under the age of 13 is taking part, you should have permission from the participant’s parents or guardian that they can attend, including details of whether their camera can be on or off. Over this age, ensure that participants have consented to have their camera on – do not make this compulsory.
* Consent is needed ahead of the session for any recording taking place.
* If possible, turn off the private message function so participants cannot message each other. This reduces the potential for incidents of cyber bullying.
* Ensure the activity is appropriate for the attendees’ age.
* Provide a professional email and work contact details so that participants can get in touch after the session should they need to discuss anything. You must not disclose any personal social media accounts, email addresses or telephone numbers.

If you are worried about a participant who is attending a virtual event you are involved in, you should report this to ParalympicsGB’s LSO.

See section 3.6 of this policy for how to report concerns.

Flowcharts for reporting concerns can be found in Appendices 5 to 8.

All concerns should be recorded on the Safeguarding and Welfare Incident Report (Appendix 9) and passed to the ParalympicsGB LSO or DSO.

## **3.5 Recording information: confidentiality, information sharing and retention of safeguarding records**

It is critical that where you have reasonable cause to believe that a child or young person may be suffering or may be at risk of suffering significant harm, you should refer your concerns to children’s social care or the police, in line with your Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements’ procedures. The concern must not be ignored. You should refer the concern to the LSO who will be able to advise on appropriate action, whilst maintaining confidentiality and only sharing information on a need to know basis.

All concerns that you have or receive should be recorded on the Safeguarding and Welfare Incident Report (Appendix 9) and passed to the ParalympicsGB LSO or DSO.

You are recording this information for:

* yourself, so you have a record of what happened.
* the ParalympicsGB Lead Safeguarding Officer (LSO) so that they can advise you.
* the ParalympicsGB Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) if at an event who will co-ordinate any action that needs to be taken.
* the Police/Children’s Social Care Services if appropriate.

It is not appropriate to share sensitive and confidential information with other people, e.g:

* colleagues.
* your fellow team members.
* other acquaintances outside the sport or organisation.

When completing the form you should:

* confine yourself to the facts – what you have observed/seen, heard or had reported to you.
* distinguish between what is your own personal knowledge and what you have been told by other people.
* not include your own opinions on the matter. Be clear where you are giving either your own or others’ interpretation of events and the reasons for this (e.g. context, individual’s response to challenge).

All concerns raised are added to a record log, which documents actions taken and decisions made in response to a concern. The record log is held in a password protected folder in ParalympicsGB’s online document management system, which has appropriate cybersecurity protections in place. All incident report forms completed are also stored in this folder. Only the LSO and the DSO have access to this folder and information will only be made available to others on a need-to-know basis.

**Information sharing:**

Sharing information is important to ensure an individual receives the right services at the right time and prevents a need from becoming more acute and difficult to meet. Decisions to share information with other organisations will be made by the Case Management Group and documented on the incident record log.

Decisions to share information will be based on the 7 principles below. The most important consideration is whether sharing information is likely to support the safeguarding and protection of a child.

1. **Necessary and proportionate**: When taking decisions about what information to share, you should consider how much information you need to release. Not sharing more data than is necessary to be of use is a key element of the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018, and you should consider the impact of disclosing information on the information subject and any third parties. Information must be proportionate to the need and level of risk.
2. **Relevant**: Only information that is relevant to the purposes should be shared with those who need it. This allows others to do their job effectively and make informed decisions.
3. **Adequate**: Information should be adequate for its purpose. Information should be of the right quality to ensure that it can be understood and relied upon.
4. **Accurate**: Information should be accurate and up to date and should clearly distinguish between fact and opinion. If the information is historical then this should be explained.
5. **Timely**: Information should be shared in a timely fashion to reduce the risk of missed opportunities to offer support and protection to a child. Timeliness is key in emergency situations and it may not be appropriate to seek consent for information sharing if it could cause delays and therefore place a child or young person at increased risk of harm. Practitioners should ensure that sufficient information is shared, as well as consider the urgency with which to share it.
6. **Secure**: Wherever possible, information should be shared in an appropriate, secure way. Practitioners must always follow their organisation’s policy on security for handling personal information.
7. **Record**: Information sharing decisions should be recorded, whether or not the decision is taken to share. If the decision is to share, reasons should be cited including what information has been shared and with whom, in line with organisational procedures. If the decision is not to share, it is good practice to record the reasons for this decision and discuss them with the requester. In line with each organisation’s own retention policy, the information should not be kept any longer than is necessary. In some rare circumstances, this may be indefinitely, but if this is the case, there should be a review process scheduled at regular intervals to ensure data is not retained where it is unnecessary to do so.

Guidance from the Government, “[Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice)**”,** describes key principles for deciding what to share:

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. However, consent may not be appropriate if informing the individual would place a child at risk or you can dispense with consent if sharing information is in the best interests of the child.
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

Further guidance can be found in [ParalympicsGB’s Privacy Policy](https://paralympics.org.uk/footer-pages/privacy-policy).

**Retention of safeguarding records:**

If concerns have been raised about an adult’s behaviour around children, ParalympicsGB will keep the relevant confidential records in a personnel file at least until they reach their normal retirement age or for 10 years – whichever is longer. This applies to volunteers, paid staff and athletes regardless of whether the allegations were unfounded. However, if the allegations are determined to be malicious ParalympicsGB will destroy the records in a timely manner.

In all matters that are of a Child Protection nature, a detailed record will be maintained of information held by ParalympicsGB on a child’s individual safeguarding file (separate from their general information). These records will be maintained securely with access only given to appropriate personnel until the child is 25.

## **3.6 Reporting the concern**

The discovery that someone you know may be abusing a child will raise feelings and concerns. Although it can be difficult to report such matters, you must remember that:

* the welfare of the child is paramount.
* being vigilant helps to protect children.
* everyone has a duty of care to report any concerns they have immediately.
* a good reporting structure ensures that concerns are dealt with fairly.

**Reporting concerns arising within a ParalympicsGB setting (at the Paralympic Games and ParalympicsGB Camps)**

All concerns should be passed to ParalympicsGB LSO or DSO in the specific camp or Paralympic Games setting, in accordance with the camp or Games welfare plan. If however the LSO/DSOs are not contactable and it is urgent, or you are concerned that a child may be in immediate danger then you should report your concerns to a statutory agency and ensure that you follow this up in writing and forward a copy of the ParalympicsGB report form to the LSO as soon as possible or within 24 hours. Contact details will be provided in the Paralympic Games/Camps welfare plan. If outside the UK at the time, concerns of suspected abuse should be reported to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) who will inform relevant local authorities and then Children’s Social Care and the police should be informed on return to the UK.

If the concern is about the LSO or DSO in the specific camp or Paralympic Games setting, the concern should be passed to the Head of the Camp or the Chef de Mission of ParalympicsGB in a Games setting.

[ParalympicsGB’s Investigation of Public Interest (Whistleblowing) Policy](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fstorage.googleapis.com%2Fparalympicsgb%2FInvestigation%2520of%2520Public%2520Interest%2520(Whistleblowing%2529%2520Policy%2520Oct%252021.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK) assures all members, staff, and volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone who, in good faith, reports a concern that a colleague is or may be abusing a child. This policy is available on the ParalympicsGB website.

Concerns raised about a ParalympicsGB member of staff or volunteer will be investigated internally by ParalympicsGB through the Case Management Group. The staff member or volunteer may be suspended as a neutral action whilst the internal investigation is in progress, See Section 7 of this policy for further information.

A flowchart for reporting concerns within a ParalympicsGB setting (at the Paralympic Games and camps) can be found in Appendix 5.

**Reporting concerns about the behaviour of a ParalympicsGB member of staff/volunteer outside a ParalympicsGB setting**

All concerns should be recorded on the Safeguarding and Welfare Incident Report (Appendix 9) and the concern passed to the ParalympicsGB LSO or DSO. If the concern is urgent and neither the LSO or DSO are available, then you should refer immediately to Children’s Social Care/Police and inform the LSO/DSO at the earliest opportunity.

If the concern is about the ParalympicsGB LSO or DSO, the concern should be passed to the Chief Executive Officer of ParalympicsGB.

[ParalympicsGB’s Investigation of Public Interest (Whistleblowing) Policy](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fstorage.googleapis.com%2Fparalympicsgb%2FInvestigation%2520of%2520Public%2520Interest%2520(Whistleblowing%2529%2520Policy%2520Oct%252021.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK) assures all members, staff, and volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone who, in good faith, reports a concern that a colleague is or may be abusing a child. This policy is available on the ParalympicsGB website.

Concerns raised about a ParalympicsGB member of staff or volunteer will be investigated internally by ParalympicsGB through the Case Management Group. The staff member or volunteer may be suspended as a neutral action whilst the internal investigation is in progress, See Section 7 of this policy for further information.

A flowchart for reporting concerns about the behaviour of a ParalympicsGB member of staff / volunteer outside a ParalympicsGB setting can be found in Appendix 6.

**Reporting concerns about the behaviour of a staff member / volunteer from an NGB or another organisation outside a ParalympicsGB setting**

All concerns should be recorded on the Safeguarding and Welfare Incident report (Appendix 9) and the concern passed to the ParalympicsGB LSO or DSO. If the concern is urgent and neither the LSO or DSO are available, then you should refer immediately to Children’s Social Care/Police and inform the LSO/DSO at the earliest opportunity.

A flowchart for reporting concerns about the behaviour of a staff member / volunteer from an NGB or another organisation outside a ParalympicsGB setting can be found in Appendix 7.

In this instance ParalympicsGB would report the concern to the relevant NGB and will also consider reporting the concern to Sport Integrity for independent investigation.

**Reporting concerns arising from outside of sport (e.g. at home, school or in the community)**

All concerns should be recorded on the Safeguarding and Welfare Incident Report (Appendix 9) and the concern passed to ParalympicsGB LSO or DSO. If the concern is urgent and neither the LSO or DSO are available, then you should refer immediately to Children’s Social Care/Police and inform the LSO/DSO at the earliest opportunity.

A flowchart for reporting concerns arising from outside sport can be found in Appendix 8.

### 3.6.1 Involving Parents or carers

ParalympicsGB is committed to working in partnership with Parents. In most situations, it is important that the DSO or LSO involves parents to clarify any initial concerns e.g. if a child seems withdrawn, they may have experienced a recent bereavement.

Where a parent or carer may be responsible for the abuse or may not be able to respond to the situation appropriately, they should not be involved, as it may place the child at greater risk. In such instances advice can be sought from Children’s Social Care about what is permitted and appropriate under information sharing principles.

### 3.6.2 Involving ParalympicsGB and NGB

The LSO must be informed of all allegations of abuse and poor practice as soon as possible. The ParalympicsGB Case Management Group has been established so that if a concern is reported, responsibility for identifying the appropriate course of action does not lie with one individual (the LSO) but is properly discussed, considered and recorded by a group. The ParalympicsGB Case Management Group will consist of the following roles for concerns reported outside a ParalympicsGB setting:

* Lead Safeguarding Officer;
* Deputy Safeguarding Officer;
* Director of Sport;
* Director of Finance and Corporate Services; and
* Head of Compliance and Governance.

If a concern is raised during the Paralympic Games or a ParalympicsGB Camp, the Case Management Group will consist of the following roles:

* Lead/Deputy Safeguarding Officer for the Games/Camp;
* Chef de Mission;
* Chief Medical Officer;
* Head of Security; and
* Director of the London Hub.

The ParalympicsGB Case Management Group will be responsible for the following:

* What further action should be taken by ParalympicsGB or the sport’s NGB.
* Whether further action, advice or investigation is needed by/from the Police or Children’s Social Care Services.
* The Local Authority Designated Officer, who manages concerns about people in positions of trust who work with children (England and Wales only), is the point of contact for advice and information.

Passing on this information is important because the matter may be just one of a series of other instances which together cause concern. It enables ParalympicsGB to work with the National Governing Bodies to analyse trends and improve existing policy and guidance.

To contact ParalympicsGB LSO e-mail safeguarding@paralympics.org.uk

### Involving Statutory Agencies

In any case of physical or sexual abuse or where the child’s immediate safety is believed to be at risk, you should contact one of the following statutory agencies immediately:

* Your local Police Child Protection Team or in an emergency dial **999**.

The police should be involved if the apparent abuse is of a criminal nature or if the incident involves a person outside the child’s family. A record should be made of the crime reference number.

* Local Authority Children’s Social Care Services (formerly known as Social Services).

This body has a statutory duty to make enquires where a child who is living or found in their area may be at risk of significant harm. This may involve talking to the child and family and gathering information from other people who know the child.

All telephone referrals to any of the above bodies should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours. You should record the following:

* name and job title of the member of staff to whom the concerns were passed.
* the time and date of the call.
* a summary of the information shared and the response received.

NSPCC helpline provides confidential advice and support for anyone concerned about a child’s safety or wellbeing**.** Contact the voice helpline by calling 0808 800 5000 (Monday to Friday 10am – 4pm), or emailing help@nspcc.org.uk at any time for free.

It doesn’t have to be an emergency — you might be looking for guidance and support on issues affecting children. Whatever it is, the dedicated NSPCC child protection specialists will be able to advise and take any necessary action.

### 3.6.4 Escalating a child safeguarding concern

Effective working together depends on an open approach and honest relationships between agencies. Problem resolution is an integral part of professional co-operation and joint working to safeguard children.

Occasionally situations arise when workers within one agency feel that the actions, inaction or decisions of another agency do not adequately safeguard a child. This inter-agency policy defines the process for resolving such professional difference.

If a child safeguarding concern has been reported to but has not been addressed by the LSO within ParalympicsGB, then the concern should be escalated to the CEO of ParalympicsGB.

If a child safeguarding concern has been reported to the NGB but has not been addressed satisfactorily by the NGB, then, in cases of suspected abuse, ParalympicsGB will report directly to the statutory agency and escalate to UK Sport/Sport England as appropriate. In cases of suspected poor practice, ParalympicsGB will escalate to UK Sport/Sport England as appropriate and consult with the NSPCC CPSU as to the best way forward.

If a child safeguarding concern has been reported to but has not been addressed by a statutory agency, then the statutory agency should be contacted again, providing the recorded information set out in 3.6.3 above.

See Appendices 5 to 8 for reporting flowcharts and appropriate escalation of concerns.

### 3.6.5 If the alleged perpetrator is a child ‘Peer on peer’ or ‘child on child’ abuse

When a child abuses another child, it is sometimes called 'peer-on-peer' or 'child-on-child' abuse. Peer-on-peer abuse refers to abuse that takes place between children of a similar age, whereas child-on-child refers to abuse between children of any age. Sometimes children might also display abusive behaviour towards adults.

Concerns can also involve under 18s who may be involved in peer-on-peer abuse, in relationships and making indecent images, bullying and other harmful sexual behaviour. If the alleged perpetrator of abuse is under 18 consider the needs of them as children in their own right. The same reporting processes outlined above will be followed but depending on the nature of the concern the advice of the Children’s Social Care may be sought.

For example, if the concern relates to team members aged 13 or above who have voluntarily (with no suggestion of coercion/ exploitation/threats, etc.) taken an indecent image of themselves, and then shared this with another individual they are in a relationship with, we will determine whether the act may be seen as experimental (e.g. for teenagers within a relationship this might not be seen as unusual behaviour).

In this case, parents/guardians should be informed that ParalympicsGB will not be referring the concern direct to police (in line with Child Exploitation and Online Protection Command (CEOP)/NPCC guidance) but will refer the matter to the relevant Children’s Social Care or the MASH Team, for assessment by them. This may be done without parental consent (for example, if it is a criminal offence which may lead to significant harm). This is to ensure that the professionals involved can make a suitable decision around supporting and guiding each child, based on any background information which will not be known to ParalympicsGB and to help parents/guardians manage that behaviour. Where both parties (sender / recipient) are at the same organisation, the Welfare Officers and other staff can also work with parents / guardians to monitor the children’s behaviour, to prevent recurrence, in the environment of ParalympicsGB.

### 3.6.6 Children in need of support

‘Working Together to Safeguarding Children’ (2023) states that funded sports organisations should have policies in place to safeguard and protect children from harm and in ‘need’. These should be followed, and systems should be in place to ensure compliance in this. Individual practitioners, whether paid or volunteer, should be aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding and protecting children from harm, how they should respond to child protection concerns and how to make a referral to local authority children’s social care or the police if necessary.

The Children Acts of 1989 and 2004 set out specific duties: section 17 of the Children Act 1989 puts a duty on the local authority to provide services to children in need in their area.

A child will be considered in need if:

* they are unlikely to achieve or maintain or to have the opportunity to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development without provision of services from the Local Authority;
* their health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision of services from the Local Authority;
* they have a disability.

Children in need may be:

* Young carers.
* Children who have Special Education Needs.
* Children with significant emotional and behavioural difficulties.
* Children at risk of exclusion from school.
* Children who are at risk of contextual safeguarding concerns <https://thecpsu.org.uk/resource-library/videos/how-can-sport-safeguard-children/>
* Children without accommodation, living in an unsafe physical environment or in Private fostering arrangements.
* Vulnerable teenagers where relationships have broken down at home.
* Unaccompanied children from abroad.
* Children who persistently self-harm or run away.

**Referring:**

Where a child is considered to be at risk of harm or in need of support, consent to share concerns with appropriate agencies is not required, it is considered good practice to discuss these actions with the parent/carer/legal guardian but should not be done when this may place the child at risk of further harm or there are suspicions of Fabricated Induced Illness. Please see the 7 Golden rules to help you decide when to share.

Anyone who has concerns about a child’s welfare should make a referral to local authority children’s social care and should do so immediately if there is a concern that the child is suffering significant harm or is likely to do so. Practitioners who make a referral should always follow up their concerns if they are not satisfied with the response. If practitioners have concerns that a child may be a potential victim of modern slavery or human trafficking then a referral should be made to the National Referral Mechanism, as soon as possible. [Modern slavery victims: referral - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/AbjDCmZg3c5EgztBQbqI?domain=gov.uk)

## **3.7** **Allegations of non-recent abuse**

Non-recent abuse (also known as historical abuse) is an allegation of neglect, physical, sexual or emotional abuse made by or on behalf of someone who is now 18 years or over, relating to an incident which took place when the alleged victim was under 18 years old. In countless circumstances children are too young to fully understand or articulate what is happening to them. Some spoke out at the time but were not believed. Others were too embarrassed to tell anyone or did not know who to turn to. For many, the abuse may have been too difficult to process and they may only remember aspects of what happened as they get older. It is never too late to report the abuse. Adults often report non-recent abuse to stop the offender abusing other children.

All allegations of non-recent abuse should be reported to the statutory authorities, you should follow the procedures given above and report to the police and/or Local Authority Children’s Social Care Services and the LSO. This is because other children, either within the Paralympic family or outside it, may be at risk from the offender.

When receiving information about non-recent historic abuse, staff or volunteers should seek to obtain where possible the following:

* Name and contact details of the person making the allegation, taking into account if the individual wishes to remain anonymous;
* Name of the individual who the allegation is about and any other identifying information, including location;
* Name of any children or other victims involved;
* Date and time of when the abuse occurred;
* Key information about the nature of the non-recent historic abuse allegation;
* Establish, where possible, if the alleged perpetrator is still working with or caring for children; and
* Establish whether or not other agencies are involved.

Support to victims of non-recent abuse is available from the National Association for People Abused in Childhood (NAPAC) on 0808 801 0331, [NAPAC - Supporting Recovery From Childhood Abuse](https://napac.org.uk/).

## **3.8 Support to deal with the aftermath of abuse**

Consideration should be given to the kind of support that children, parents and members of staff may need in the aftermath of an abuse case. Use of helplines, support groups and open meetings will maintain an open culture and help the healing process.

Childline can provide support for children: <https://www.childline.org.uk/>

The British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy Therapist Directory is available from The British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy, [How to find a therapist: BACP Therapist Directory](https://www.bacp.co.uk/about-therapy/using-our-therapist-directory/), e-mail: bac@bacp.co.uk, [British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy](https://www.bacp.co.uk/)

Consideration should be given to what kind of support may be appropriate for the alleged perpetrator. Whilst the investigation is on-going the alleged perpetrator will be given the detail of the process to be followed and ParalympicsGB will provide details of a single point of contact within the organisation.

They can also be directed towards The British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy Directory (details above) or The Samaritans who provide, non-religious, non-political, 24-hour confidential support line: 116 123, email: jo@samaritans.org, an online chat option is also available at: <https://www.samaritans.org/>

# 4.0 Designated Persons with responsibility for safeguarding children

## **4.1 Lead Safeguarding Officer (LSO)**

The LSO has a child-focused approach and communicates and provides advice and support at all levels. They have influencing skills and an ability to work with conflict and with emotionally distressing matters. The LSO has knowledge of relevant legislation, government guidance, ParalympicsGB Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy and procedures and will promote and demonstrate anti-discriminatory practice.

### 4.1.1 Responsibilities

The LSO has overall responsibility for the development and establishment of ParalympicsGB’s approach to safeguarding children and adults at risk.

### 4.1.2 Role

* To coordinate ParalympicsGB’s action in any safeguarding case and convene a case management group as appropriate to decide on the course of action that ParalympicsGB should take in any particular concern.
* To act as a first point of contact for Safeguarding matters outside of a ParalympicsGB event or Paralympic Games time.
* To liaise with the DSOs over individual cases, proposed policy and guidance.
* To take a lead role in maintaining and reviewing ParalympicsGB’s Welfare Plans.
* To co-ordinate the dissemination of policy, procedures and resources throughout ParalympicsGB and with relevant stakeholders.
* To ensure appropriate whistle blowing procedures are followed and promote an open and inclusive culture that enables safeguarding and equality and diversity issues to be addressed.
* To represent ParalympicsGB at external meetings related to safeguarding.
* To keep up to date with own knowledge and skills.

ParalympicsGB’s Deputy Safeguarding Officer is in place to support and cover the LSO in all of the above safeguarding activities and is the main point of contact should the LSO not be available.

The LSO and Deputy Safeguarding Officer should undergo the safe recruitment procedure outlined in this policy and ParalympicsGB’s recruitment policy.

**Lead Safeguarding Officer (LSO) Contact Details**

Clare Bishop, Head of Athlete Services, 07841 447869

Clare.Bishop@paralympics.org.uk

**Deputy Safeguarding Officer:**

Helen Lee, Athlete Services Officer, 07770 688181

Helen.lee@paralympics.org.uk

## **4.2 Games-time Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSO)**

### 4.2.1 Responsibilities

DSOs will be appointed for each event or competition organised by ParalympicsGB in line with the Event Welfare Plan. (see Appendix 2). The DSOs are responsible for co-ordinating action at an event on receipt of any concerns or referrals. The DSOs will have read and understood ParalympicsGB’s Safeguarding & Protecting Children Policy and have an appropriate level of training in order to respond to concerns. It is essential that the DSOs understand and can act in line with the Welfare Plan for the event.

### 4.2.2 Role

* To provide information and advice on child protection at the event.
* To promote the safeguarding policies at the event.
* Receive information from staff, volunteers, young people or parents who have child protection concerns, and to record it.
* Assess the information promptly and carefully, clarifying or obtaining more information about the matter as appropriate.
* Making the decision whether to immediately exclude the individual from the event pending investigation.
* Make a formal referral to a statutory child protection agency if appropriate.
* Report any referrals or concerns to ParalympicsGB’s LSO as soon as possible in line with ParalympicsGB procedures.
* To ensure appropriate whistle blowing procedures are followed and promote an open and inclusive culture that enables safeguarding and equality and diversity issues to be addressed.
* Ensure that appropriate information is available at the time of referral and that the referral is confirmed in writing, under confidential cover, using ParalympicsGB referral form.

The DSOs should undergo the safe recruitment vetting procedure outlined in this policy.

## 4.3 Board Welfare and Safety Champion

ParalympicsGB has appointed a Board welfare and safety champion with the required knowledge, skills and expertise who will ensure that safeguarding remains a central principle of the operations and development of ParalympicsGB.

Responsibilities will include:

* Ensure safeguarding is embedded as appropriate within the work, discussions and decisions of the Board.
* Ensure that the Board receives safeguarding training at least every 3 years.
* Ensure that ParalympicsGB has identified a Lead Safeguarding Officer and Designated Safeguarding Officer.
* Provide support, check and challenge to the ParalympicsGB Lead Safeguarding Officer.
* Drive and ensure the development and implementation of the safeguarding action plan.
* Help to represent ParalympicsGB’s approach to safeguarding.

## 4.4 ParalympicsGB Athletes’ Commission

ParalympicsGB Athletes’ Commission acts as an advisory group to ParalympicsGB, representing the views of athletes to ParalympicsGB Board, Executive Team and the Games Planning Group. ParalympicsGB Athletes’ Commission will be consulted for advice and input on any matters concerning athlete safeguarding and welfare, including children. Such matters will include changes to ParalympicsGB safeguarding policies and procedures, which directly impact on the athletes, and Games-time welfare plans.

# 5.0 Recruiting and Selecting People to work with Children

ParalympicsGB will ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to prevent unsuitable people from working with children.

ParalympicsGB will ensure effective recruitment and selection for core staff and will follow these steps:

1. Advertise all posts via appropriate outlets.

A job advertisement should be designed to attract the best people, but also deter anyone who might present a risk to children’s safety. It should describe what the role entails and the sort of person you are looking for. If the post meets the eligibility for a criminal records check, this should be stated.

1. In every job advertisement, give a clear role description, explaining the full range of duties the job will involve. Also include a person specification that describes the skills and attributes the post-holder must have.
2. Shortlist the most suitable applicants and interview them accordingly.
In order to develop a shortlist, particularly paid roles, applications should be scored against the specifications of the role. Interview questions should relate to these specifications and be used to establish whether the candidate:
* Understands the needs of the children.
* Understands the boundaries when working with children.
* Considers the views and perspectives of young people and parents.
1. Obtain references, identification and originals of any necessary qualifications from candidates.
2. Ask Applicants to complete a self-disclosure form where they are asked if they have ever been known to any Children’s Services department as being a risk or potential risk to children and if they have been the subject of any disciplinary investigation and/or sanction by any organisation due to concerns about their behaviour towards children.
3. Carry out Disclosure and Barring Service checks, or other vetting procedures where post is eligible. When a DBS check has not come back clear, the Chief Executive and the LSO, working with Corporate Services, will carry out a risk assessment to assess the risks of employing the individual into the role for which they have applied. A risk assessment of individuals will be carried out based on the following:
* nature of the job, work environment and level of supervision.
* level of contact with children and/or vulnerable persons.
* circumstances leading to the offence(s).
* whether the applicant is a repeat offender.
* length of time since the offence took place.
* circumstantial information given by the individual.
* attempts made to rehabilitate.
* changes in the individual’s circumstances which make a recurrence less likely.
* country in which the offence was committed (e.g. differences in the legal context).
* degree of remorse and motivation to change shown by the individual.
* risk of opportunity to re-offend.
1. Provide a thorough induction for new staff to ensure they are familiar with responsibilities of the post. The induction process should include their signing up to the codes of conduct.
2. Appoint staff for an initial probationary/trial period, with a review before they are confirmed in the post.

Those working and selected as part of ParalympicsGB for the Paralympic Games, signing a Team Members Agreement or Associate Team Members Agreement, who are employed by a NGB or other partner will be assessed for suitability by that employer or partner. ParalympicsGB will ask for the NGB or partner to provide a statement for suitability and proof of vetting and barring checks undertaken or other procedures where post is eligible and may ask for evidence that an appropriate safe recruitment procedure has been followed.

Those working and selected to work with ParalympicsGB on other events (e.g. Paralympic Inspiration Programme), who are employed by an NGB or other partner will be assessed for suitability by that employer or partner. ParalympicsGB will ask for the NGB or partner to provide a statement for suitability and proof of having undergone safe recruitment process including criminal records checks where eligible.

This applies to anyone whether voluntary or paid positions who are working with children. The steps that should be taken are the same for volunteers or paid employees.

## **5.1 Safe Recruitment Practice**

All appointments to roles requiring DBS Enhanced Disclosures must be expressed to be conditional upon the Individual complying with the vetting requirements and receipt of satisfactory DBS clearance.

This applies equally to paid staff and volunteers.

All volunteers and employees working in a role that involves significant access to children, or where they hold a Position of Trust, or existing volunteers or employees who change their role to work with children, are required to complete the following vetting process:

* All volunteers/staff should complete an application form. The application form will help to assess an applicant's suitability to work with children based on their skills and competencies as well as eliciting information about an applicant's past and providing a self disclosure about any matter that might influence their suitability to work with children.
* provide two appropriate referees.
* provide full details of previous volunteering experience or relevant employment.
* provide evidence of their identity (such as a driving licence or passport with photo).

In addition, those working in a Regulated Activity must also comply with legal requirements of the *Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006* and *Protection of Freedoms Act 2012*, as these are implemented:

In addition to an enhanced DBS check, individuals must be checked against the barred list prior to commencing a role in Regulated Activity.

* On establishing that a DBS Enhanced Disclosure has been issued, ParalympicsGB requests that the Individual sends the original DBS Enhanced Disclosure to ParalympicsGB within 21 days of the request.
* pending receipt of the DBS Enhanced Disclosure, the Individual shall not be permitted to undertake a role in Regulated Activity but may remain in a supervised role for a maximum of 3 months.

The self-declaration form asks prospective volunteers and employees if they have ever been known to any Children’s Services department as being a risk or potential risk to children and if they have been the subject of any disciplinary investigation and/or sanction by any organisation due to concerns about their behaviour towards children.

The recruiting officer should make it clear that a failure to disclose relevant information will result in disciplinary action and possible dismissal or exclusion. It should also be made clear that having a criminal record is not necessarily a barrier to working in sport. Individuals being asked to complete a self declaration and a Disclosure application should be made aware of ParalympicsGB’s policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders.

For more information on DBS checks see Appendix 3 and for more information on ParalympicsGB’s recruitment process please see the ParalympicsGB Recruitment Policy.

#  Awareness and training

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

* Analyse their own practice against established good practice, and to ensure their practice is not likely to result in allegations being made.
* Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice or possible abuse.
* Respond to concerns expressed by a child.
* Work safely and effectively with children.

ParalympicsGBrequires:

* Coaching staff, with regular responsibility for children, to attend a recognised face to face safeguarding awareness workshop, to ensure they have an understanding of what is considered to be good practice and to facilitate the development of a positive culture towards safeguarding children and adults at risk.
* Relevant personnel (eg Games time staff) to receive advisory information outlining good practice and informing them about what to do if they have concerns about the behaviour of an adult, or a child, towards a child or vulnerable adult. Information received via the event specific welfare plan.
* ParalympicsGB staff should attend updated training where relevant. It is advised that this is undertaken every three years. Information about meeting training needs can be obtained from UK Coaching ([We're here for the COACH - UK Coaching](https://www.ukcoaching.org/)), the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) – Child Protection in Sport Unit ([NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit | CPSU](https://thecpsu.org.uk/)), and the Home Country Sport Councils.
* For events and competitions, the Designated Safeguarding Officers and the Chef de Mission should attend the appropriate NSPCC CPSU training workshop.

# **7.0 Complaints & Disciplinary Procedures**

ParalympicsGB has its own complaints & disciplinary procedure for dealing with breaches of the Safeguarding & Protecting Children Policy and procedures.

* If the reported concern is alleged to have arisen in the course of a person’s employment or deployment by ParalympicsGB, they will be subject to ParalympicsGB complaints procedures and sanctions stated in the staff handbook. Following any investigations this may lead to disciplinary process being instituted. If the person is employed by a partner organisation ParalympicsGB may decide to await the outcome of the employers’ procedures before starting its own investigation.
* If a case is being investigated by a statutory agency, ParalympicsGB may suspend / de-select the individual concerned whilst this investigation is taking place. This is a neutral act and is not intended to prejudge the outcome of the investigation, but simply to remove the individual from contact with children until the investigation is concluded. Once the statutory agency’s investigation is completed, ParalympicsGB’s decision will be informed by the findings and it will assess the case following its own disciplinary procedures.
* The Local Designated Officer (LADO) will provide advice and guidance to ParalympicsGB, liaising with the police and other agencies and monitoring the progress to ensure that the case is dealt with as quickly as possible, consistent with a thorough and fair process. The LADO should also be informed within one working day of all allegations that come to an employer’s attention or that are made directly to the police
* Irrespective of the findings of any Children’s Social Care or police inquiries, the *case management group* will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff, volunteer or athlete should be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. This may be a difficult decision; particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, the case management groupmust reach a decision based upon the available information which could suggest that on a balance of probability, it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of the child(ren) must remain of paramount importance throughout.
* If the alleged perpetrator is a member of an NGB then ParalympicsGB fully expects that NGB to enact its own procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse, bullying and poor practice. At all stages of this process ParalympicsGB should be kept informed of the status of the investigation and the NGB's actions.
* ParalympicsGB has a statutory responsibility to make a referral to the DBS (England and Wales) where there have been allegations made against a member of staff or volunteer that have resulted in them being removed, or having resigned themselves, from their duties with vulnerable groups. The removal decision is based on actual or likely harm to children and young people. In England and Wales this will be done in consultation with the Designated Officer (previously LADO).
* Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality for all concerned, and consideration will be given to what support may be appropriate to children, parents, members of staff and volunteers.
* It is not always possible to determine exact timescales for when cases will be resolved, however ParalympicsGB will always try to ensure that all parties know what procedure will be followed and what the expected time scales are. If there is a delay they will endeavour to inform all parties why there is a delay and when any development is expected. There should not be any period without communication of more than 28 days with involved persons. Ideally case management processes should not extend over more than three months, only in exceptional circumstances should they extend up to six months.

# **8.0 Relevant Policies**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following ParalympicsGB policies:

* Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures;
* [Investigation of Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblowing) Policy](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fstorage.googleapis.com%2Fparalympicsgb%2FInvestigation%2520of%2520Public%2520Interest%2520(Whistleblowing%2529%2520Policy%2520Oct%252021.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK);
* Recruitment Policy;
* [Equality and Diversity Statement and Policy](https://paralympics.org.uk/footer-pages/equality-and-diversity).

*Document Owner:              Lead Safeguarding Officer*

*Policy Approved by:           Board
Date Policy Approved:       16 July 2025*

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# **Appendix 1 - Symptoms of abuse and the promotion of good practice**

Upon recruitment, ParalympicsGB staff members sign a Code of Conduct as part of their contract and staff handbook, requiring them to behave in the appropriate manner. As part of the memorandum and articles (M&As), appointed Board members and the NPC membership commit to ParalympicsGB policies as well as ParalympicsGB culture and values upon commencement. Volunteers and young people also sign up to the code of conduct.

All members selected as part of ParalympicsGB for the Paralympic Summer/Winter Games as an associate team member of full team member (athletes and support staff) are required to sign a Team Members Agreement outlining expected behaviour as well as broader aspects relating to participation at the Paralympic Games.

For other events, ParalympicsGB will have a Code of Conduct/event plans in place that all participants will be expected to adhere to, outlining the expected behaviours for different roles.

Failure to behave in the appropriate manner as outlined in the Team Members Agreement/Code of Conduct and M&As can result in de-selection from the team/removal from ParalympicsGB and will be subject to disciplinary procedures.

The Code of Conduct is available upon request from ParalympicsGB.

Those working directly with children should:

* respect the developmental stage of each child and not risk sacrificing their welfare in a desire for club, national or personal achievement.
* ensure that the training intensity is appropriate to the physical, social and emotional stage of the development of the child.
* work with parents and children to develop training and competition schedules which are suited to the needs and the lifestyle of the child, not the ambitions of the parents, coaches or team managers.
* build relationships based on mutual trust and respect, encouraging children to take responsibility for their own development and decision-making.
* always be publicly open when working with children:
	+ avoid coaching sessions or meetings where a coach and an individual athlete are completely unobserved.
	+ ensure parents are aware of the content and nature of any communications the coach has directly with their children, including emails and text messages.
	+ try to avoid one on one situations in changing rooms. If a child needs to be supervised/helped try to involve parents or helpers.
* maintain an appropriate and open environment, with no secrets.
* avoid unnecessary physical contact with young people. Physical contact (touching) can be appropriate so long as:
	+ it is neither intrusive nor disturbing.
	+ the reason that it is necessary has been fully explained.
	+ the child’s permission has been openly given.
	+ it is delivered in an open environment.
* maintain a safe and appropriate relationship with children. ‘Position of trust' is a legal term that refers to certain roles and settings where an adult is in a position of authority or responsibility and can have a considerable amount of power and influence on a young person’s life. Examples include coaches, mentors or another adult a young person depends upon for their sporting development, success or position in a team. It is now against the law in England and Wales for someone in a position of trust within sport organisations to engage in sexual activity with a child in their care, even if that child is over the age of consent (16 or over). ParalympicsGB (along with NGBs) has Games-time code of conducts and linked disciplinary processes that supports the maintenance of healthy and positive relationships between sports personnel and young people. The code of conduct references the definition of roles that constitute positions of trust and states that, in line with the law in England and Wales, any sexual relationships/activity between adults in those roles and 16 - 17 year olds for whom they are in a position of authority constitutes an offence.
* be an excellent role model by maintaining appropriate standards of behaviour at social events and competitions.
* gain written parental consent through the NGB, to act In Loco Parentis for the administration of emergency first aid or other medical treatment if the need arises.
* be aware of any medical conditions, existing injuries and medicines being taken. Keep a written record of any injury or accident that occurs, together with details of any treatment given.
* arrange that someone with appropriate training in and current knowledge of emergency first aid is available at training.

**Poor practice**

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

* communicating directly to a child without the parents’ knowledge, this includes phoning, texting and emailing.
* spending excessive amounts of time alone with a child away from others.
* engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games.
* allowing or engaging in inappropriate touching of any form.
* using inappropriate language to a child or allowing children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
* making sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in jest.
* reducing a child to tears as a form of control.
* letting allegations made by a child go uninvestigated, unrecorded, or not acted upon.
* doing things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves.
* taking children alone in a car on journeys, however short (see note below).
* inviting or taking children to your home or office where they will be alone with you (see note below).
* sharing a room with a child (unless you are the carer).

**Note:** *In exceptional circumstances it may be impractical to avoid some of these particular examples of poor practice. In which case, to protect both the child and yourself, you must seek parental consent and also make sure that the relevant Safeguarding Officer is aware of the situation and gives approval.*

If whilst in your care a child is accidentally hurt, the child seems distressed in any way, appears to be sexually aroused by your actions, or misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done, report any such incidents as soon as possible to another adult involved in the organisation of the activity / event, make a brief written note of it and inform ParalympicsGB’s LSO/DSO. Parents should also be informed of the incident.

**Abuse**

Abuse in all its forms can affect a child at any age. The effects can be so damaging that without appropriate intervention, they may continue to have a very negative impact upon an individual into adulthood.

An individual who has been abused may:

* find it difficult, or impossible to maintain a stable, trusting relationship.
* become involved with drugs or prostitution.
* attempt suicide or self-harm.
* go on to abuse another child.

Children with disabilities may be at increased risk of abuse through various factors such as:

* stereotyping.
* prejudice.
* discrimination, including minority group backgrounds.
* isolation.
* powerlessness to protect themselves.
* inability to communicate that abuse has occurred.

**Indicators of abuse**

Even for those experienced in working with child abuse, it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. It is not the responsibility of those working with or for ParalympicsGB to decide that child abuse is occurring, but it is their responsibility to act on any concerns.

Indications that a child is being abused may include one or more of the following:

* unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries or an injury for which an 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 a child
* unexplained changes in a child’s behaviour, e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn, displaying sudden outbursts of temper or behaviour changing over time.
* inappropriate sexual awareness.
* engaging in sexually explicit behaviour.
* distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
* difficulty in making friends.
* being prevented from socialising with other children.
* displaying variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite.
* losing weight for no apparent reason.
* becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt.

Abuse may take a number of forms, and may be classified under the following headings:

**Neglect**

*“Neglect is 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:*

*a. provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment).*

*b. protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger.*

*c. ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers).*

*d. ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.*

*It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.”*

In a sports situation this could include:

* a coach not keeping Children safe by exposing them to undue cold, heat or the unnecessary risk of injury e.g. allowing Children under their supervision to train or race inappropriately clothed for the prevailing conditions.
* a Parent consistently leaving a Child without adequate provisions e.g. food, water, clothing, sun protection.

**Physical Abuse**

*“Physical abuse 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.”*

In a sports situation this could include a coach disregarding the individual requirements of each child’s impairment, growing body or needs when setting a training programme e.g. in adaptive rowing allowing 14 year olds to undertake hour-long, continuous ergos.

**Sexual Abuse**

*“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. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.”*

In a sport situation, indicators could include:

* a coach engaging in unnecessary and inappropriate physical contact e.g. massaging the shoulders of the child suggestively.
* a coach making suggestive comments to their junior athletes.
* an inappropriately close relationship developing between a young athlete and a coach.
* an individual spending an unnecessary amount of time in the changing area when children are present.

**Child Sexual Exploitation**

*“Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also*

*occur through the use of technology.”*

**Child Trafficking**

*“The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered 'trafficking in human beings.”*

**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 only 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 seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. 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.”*

In a sports situation this could include:

* a parent or coach subjecting a child to constant criticism, name-calling, sarcasm, bullying or racism.
* a parent or coach putting a child under unrealistic pressure in order to perform to high expectations.

**Bullying**

*“Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves”*

Bullying can be:

* **Emotional** being unfriendly, excluding (emotionally and physically), sending hurtful text messages, tormenting, (e.g. hiding kit or equipment, threatening gestures).
* **Physical** pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
* **Racist**  racial taunts, graffiti or gestures
* **Sexual** unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
* **Homophobic** because of, or focussing on, the issue of sexuality
* **Verbal** name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.

**Anti-Bullying Policy**

ParalympicsGB is committed to fostering a caring, friendly and safe environment for everyone involved in Paralympic sport so they can participate in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in sport. If bullying does occur, all athletes, coaches, volunteers or Parents should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

Bullies come from all walks of life. They bully for a variety of reasons and may even have been bullied or abused themselves. Typically, bullies can have low self-esteem, be excitable, aggressive or jealous. Bullies can be boys or girls, men or women. Although bullying often takes place in schools, research shows it can and does occur anywhere where there is inadequate supervision – on the way to and from school, at a sporting event, in the playground or changing rooms. Competitive sports are an ideal environment for the bully.

The bully in sport can be a:

* Parent who pushes too hard.
* coach who adopts a ‘win at all costs’ philosophy.
* athlete who intimidates or ridicules a peer.
* team official who places unfair pressure on a person.
* spectator who constantly shouts abuse.

**Why is it important to respond to bullying?**

Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Athletes and Personnel who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. Everyone involved with the Paralympic family has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

**Signs and indicators**

The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to children. A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

* says they are being bullied.
* is unwilling to go to training sessions.
* becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence.
* feels ill before training sessions.
* has clothes torn or possessions damaged.
* has possessions go ‘missing’.
* asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully).
* has unexplained cuts or bruises.
* is frightened to say what’s wrong.
* gives improbable excuses for any of the above.

In more extreme cases:

* starts stammering.
* cries themselves to sleep at night, has nightmares or wets the bed.
* becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable.
* is bullying other children or siblings.
* stops eating.
* self harms.
* attempts or threatens suicide or runs away.
* These signs and behaviours may indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and be investigated.

**Procedures for reporting bullying**

1. Report bullying incidents to the Safeguarding Officer or a member of ParalympicsGB staff.
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be referred to the Lead Safeguarding Officer for advice and appropriate action (see flowchart Appendices 5-8).
3. If the bullying persists / cannot be resolved, parents may be informed and may be asked to come to a meeting to discuss the problem.
4. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.
5. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly.
6. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour.
7. If mediation fails and the bullying is seen to continue ParalympicsGB will initiate disciplinary action appropriate to the specific circumstance.

**Grooming**

The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) define grooming as a process that "involves the offender building a relationship with a child, and sometimes with their wider family, gaining their trust and a position of power over the child, in preparation for abuse."

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 states it is a criminal offence to cause or incite a child under 16 years old to engage in sexual activity. The offence carries a maximum prison sentence of 14 years. It can apply where a communication with a child can be shown to have caused or incited some kind of sexual activity by the child e.g. naked or semi-naked posing.

In 2017, the Serious Crime Act 2015 inserted a new offence of “engaging in sexual communication with a child” into the Sexual Offences Act 2003. It criminalises a person aged 18 or over who communicates with a child under 16 years old (who the adult does not reasonably believe to be 16 years old or over), if the communication is sexual or if it is intended to obtain from the child a communication which is sexual. The offence applies only when the defendant can be shown to have acted for the purposes of sexual gratification and carries a maximum prison sentence of two years.

Children can be groomed face to face or online, by a stranger or by someone they know. Groomers can be male or female and could be any age. They will hide their true intentions and may spend months or years gaining a child’s trust and in some cases the trust of the child’s family to allow them to be left alone with a child. Those who work with children may use similar tactics to gain the trust of the child and their colleagues.

Tactics a groomer may use are:

* pretending to be someone they are not.
* offering advice and understanding.
* buying gifts.
* giving a child attention.
* using their professional position or reputation.
* taking them on trips, outings and holidays.

Once they have gained a child’s trust groomers will exploit that relationship often by isolating the child from their family and friends so the child becomes dependent on them. They may introduce secrets as a way of controlling or sometimes scaring the child not to tell. This can include blackmailing the child or making them feel guilty or ashamed.

Groomers use online social networks to connect with children. They can easily hide their identity in the online world and can spend time learning about children from their online profiles. They may pretend to be a child and chat or become friends with children they are targeting. Groomers do not need to meet children in real life to abuse them and increasingly children are being sexually exploited online after being persuaded to engage in online sexual activity.

# Appendix 2 - Welfare planning for ParalympicsGB events and camps

The following elements will be considered in the welfare plans: Camps & Games, Paralympic Inspiration Programme and other ParalympicsGB lead events:

**Designated Safeguarding Officer(s)**

At all events where children or adults at risk will be participating ParalympicsGB will designate a member(s) of staff as the Designated Safeguarding Officer(s). The size and complexity of the event and the associated risks will be reflected the number of DSOs and the communication and reporting structure between them. Each DSO will undergo appropriate training to handle safeguarding concerns prior to their appointment. The roles and responsibilities of the DSO are set out in section 4.2.

At a Paralympic Games the Chef de Mission has ultimate authority for deciding what action should be taken on reported cases and is responsible for taking concerns forward to the statutory agencies if appropriate.

The ParalympicsGB safeguarding team will be clearly identified and communicated to all athletes and support staff prior to their arrival and will be reinforced on arrival and during the course of their stay.

**Team Member Agreement /Codes of Conduct**

All members selected as part of ParalympicsGB for the Paralympic Summer/Winter Games as an associate team member of full member (athletes and support staff) are required to sign a Team Member Agreement outlining expected behaviour as well as broader aspects relating to participation at the Paralympic Games. Failure to behave in the appropriate manner as outlined in the Team Members Agreement can result in de-selection from the team.

For other events, ParalympicsGB will have a Code of Conduct/event plans in place that all participants will be expected to adhere to, outlining the expected behaviours for different roles.

The Team Member Agreement covers areas around media, alcohol, drugs, sexual behaviour and anti-social behaviour. For further detail, please review the relevant Code of Conduct and/or Team Member Agreement for the specific event.

**Changing rooms and facilities**

Where required children should be supervised in changing rooms by two adults.

* Adult coaches or volunteers should not shower or change at the same time as the children they have been working with.
* No staff or volunteers, medical or otherwise should be present when Children of the opposite sex are showering or changing (for example a male coach working with a female crew).
* Separate changing facilities should be available for each gender.
* If a child is uncomfortable showering or changing in public no pressure should be put on them to do so, they should be encouraged to change and shower at home.
* Where assistance is needed, carers should be involved in deciding how best the child can be assisted. Always ensure the children consent to the assistance that is offered.
* No photographic equipment should be used in the changing room environment. This includes cameras, video cameras, camera phones etc.

**Staff ratios**

Although there is government guidance for people working with groups of Children, it is essential that **a separate risk** assessment is taken for each group of children and that this is reviewed for each session. Participants under the age of 18, even those qualified as coaches, should be supervised at all times.

In line with the national guidance, the level of supervision should take account of the:

* age, ability and impairment of the children.
* type of session/nature of the activity being undertaken.
* the child’s growing independence.
* environment that the session is taking place in.
* risk assessment.

If there is an accident or incident you should ensure there is always someone available to supervise the remaining Children. Coaches working with children should ensure that they do not work in isolation.

**Supervision and Communication with parents, coaches and NGBs**

For all ParalympicsGB camps and events the Welfare Plan will consider the specific circumstances of the event and who the most appropriate first point of contact is if a safeguarding concern is raised.

In general during the Paralympic Games or at a Pre-Games holding camp ParalympicsGB Safeguarding Policy will take precedence. During camps and other events where athletes are attending on behalf of or through a NGB, that NGB’s safeguarding lead officer will be contacted should a Safeguarding concern arise. ParalympicsGB’s DSO should hold details of the NGB Safeguarding Officer.

If a child is attending an event as an independent athlete, for example at a talent ID or Paralympic Potential Day the Statutory agency or parents will be the first point of contact and any disciplinary matters will be dealt with under ParalympicsGB’s safeguarding procedures. The DSO should hold emergency contact details for the parent whether or not they are present.

A parent, coach or carer who can act In Loco Parentis must accompany any child attending a ParalympicsGB event. Anyone acting in this position would be expected to be aware of details of transport, pick up and return points and times, competition or venue details, team leader or coach contact details, emergency contact details for parents, costs, dietary requirements (if relevant) and any other special requirements or medical details. Strict instructions should be given to parents regarding the drop off and return locations and times.

**Transport**

If transporting children as part of the event or camp points to consider include vehicle type (public transport, minibus, coach or private car), accessibility, length of journey, competence of driver, journey time, distance, stopping points, supervision during journey and legislation regarding seat belts.

**Emergency Procedures**

The team leader or coach should know how to contact emergency services and have access to at least a basic First Aid box. Those in charge of children have a duty to ensure that they are kept safe and healthy and should not hesitate to act in an emergency and to take life saving action in an extreme situation.

**Photography**

The use of photography and film is an excellent way of capturing sporting moments for use in the promotion of the sport and/or to celebrate individual success. There is evidence that some people have used sporting events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young athletes and athletes with a disability in vulnerable positions. With this in mind ParalympicsGB will only use appropriate imagery of its athletes on its website and in its promotional documents. Consent to use this imagery will always be sought from parents where applicable.

**Indecent images**

It is a criminal Act Under the Protection of Children Act 1978 and Criminal Justice Act 1988 to take, make, distribute (send), upload and/or possess any indecent image of a child (including those taken/possessed by other under 18-year-olds). It is also an offence to request a child to take, make, distribute or upload such an image, or encourage another to commit an offence. “Making” includes opening, accessing, downloading and storing online content. “Sharing” includes sending on an email, offering on a file share platform, uploading to a site that other people can access and possession with a view to distribute the image(s).

All staff should be vigilant and any concerns over the misuse of photography or images of ParalympicsGB athletes should be reported to a DSO or the LSO.

[Videoing as a coaching aid](http://www.thecpsu.org.uk/Scripts/content/Default.asp?Page=OrgsPhotography&MenuPos=Left&Menu=2346&Sel=0404#video): there is no intention to prevent coaches using video equipment as a legitimate coaching aid. However, athletes and their parents should be made aware that this is part of the coaching programme, their consent obtained, and such films should be stored safely.

**Case Management Group**

At major events it may be appropriate to form a case management group to provide support for the DSO or LSO and to help investigate or manage any cases or referrals.

This group must work within the policies and procedures of ParalympicsGB to ensure that all decisions relating to safeguarding children are reached following a fair, open and transparent process. The group will comprise of the LSO and two other suitably qualified persons. It may call upon whatever professional input is required on an advisory capacity for each case.

**Responsibilities**

* To recommend, where appropriate, that a person is referred to DBS (England and Wales).
* To recommend to the appropriate member of ParalympicsGB’s senior management team where appropriate, that a person is temporarily suspended or banned from some or all activities at the event.
* To identify who should be informed, for example refer to statutory agencies and/or NGB.

**Role**

* To support the LSO to make decisions on the initial approach to all reported cases related to the welfare and protection of children. That is, to the ‘route’ a case will take either internally or via external referral to statutory agencies.

# Appendix 3 - Criminal records checks

All volunteers and employees working in a role that involves Significant Access to children, or where they hold a Position of Trust, or existing volunteers or employees who change their role to work with children, are required to complete a vetting process as outlined in the safeguarding policy in 5.1 Safe Recruitment Practice.

Disclosure information for core staff will be assessed by ParalympicsGB LSO and the Director of Finance and Corporate Services, who is responsible for Human Resources at ParalympicsGB and has undertaken appropriate training in safe recruitment in line with ParalympicsGB’s policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders and the DBS (or equivalent agency’s) Code of Practice (available on website). Completing a criminal records Disclosure form is a confidential and sensitive matter for some people and care should be taken to explain how the information contained on the certificate will be treated.

Disclosure certificates must be renewed at least every three years if a person remains in post or more regularly if, for example, there is a concern raised, if the person changes their role or moves to a new role, or if the person has been absent from ParalympicsGB for a significant period.

**Note:** Completing the above process does not guarantee that an individual is safe to work with children. ParalympicsGB will use information from the Disclosure certificate and any additional information from the Disclosure agency as part of an overall recruitment and selection process to assess any potential risk. The Line Manager will also assess for the individual’s suitability by taking up references, interviewing and supervision.

**Who should be considered for eligibility to check criminal records history?**

* medical staff.
* sport science staff.
* DSOs.
* those with sole access to children.
* overnight staff supporting children.

It is not enough to meet the Disclosure Agency eligibility criteria, to state that an individual may come into contact with children or adults at risk. Eligibility to apply for a Disclosure check depends on the specific role a person will perform whilst conducting their duties within an organisation. A risk assessment should be undertaken to assess the role and duties they are expected to fulfil whilst carrying out their role and Disclosure applications should be made accordingly.

All appointments to roles requiring DBS Enhanced Disclosures must be expressed to be conditional upon the Individual complying with ParalympicsGB’s vetting requirements and receipt of satisfactory DBS clearance. Individuals must be checked against the barred list prior to commencing a role in Regulated Activity.

Regulated Activity working with children involves Activity which involves:
Teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children; or providing guidance/advice on well-being; or driving a vehicle only for children and happens frequently (once a week or more often) or happens intensively (on 4 or more days in a 30-day period, or overnight) and the individual carrying out the activity of teaching, training or instructing is unsupervised.

**More information can be found here:** <http://www.safenetwork.org.uk/help_and_advice/employing_the_right_people/Pages/regulated-activity-supervision-guidance.aspx>

Information about the different Disclosure services in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland is available from:

England and Wales: [www.direct.gov.uk/crb](http://www.direct.gov.uk/crb)

Scotland: [www.disclosurescotland.co.uk](http://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk)

Northern Ireland: [www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/using-criminal-record-check](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/using-criminal-record-check)

# Appendix 4 - ParalympicsGB policy and procedure for dealing with online concerns and abuse

The purpose of this policy statement is to:

* ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people is paramount when adults, young people or children are using the internet, social media or mobile devices.
* provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to online safety.
* ensure that, as an organisation, we operate in line with our values and within the law in terms of how we use online devices.

The policy statement applies to all staff, volunteers, children and young people and anyone involved in ParalympicsGB activities.

We believe that:

* children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind.
* children should be able to use the internet for education and personal development, but safeguards need to be in place to ensure they are kept safe at all times.

We recognise that:

* the online world provides everyone with many opportunities; however, it can also present risks and challenges.
* we have a duty to ensure that all children, young people and adults involved in our organisation are protected from potential harm online.
* we have a responsibility to help keep children and young people safe online, whether or not they are using ParalympicsGB’s network and devices.
* working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people’s welfare and in helping young people to be responsible in their approach to online safety.
* all children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

* the LSO and Games-time DSOs ensuring electronic communications with athletes are cyber secure.
* providing clear and specific directions to staff and volunteers on how to behave online.
* supporting and encouraging the young people engaging with ParalympicsGB to use the internet, social media and mobile phones in a way that keeps them safe and shows respect for others.
* supporting and encouraging parents and carers to do what they can to keep their children safe online.
* developing clear and robust procedures to enable us to respond appropriately to any incidents of inappropriate online behaviour, whether by an adult or a child or young person.
* reviewing and updating the security of our information systems regularly.
* ensuring that user names, logins, email accounts and passwords are used effectively.
* ensuring personal information about the adults and children who are involved in our organisation is held securely and shared only as appropriate.
* ensuring that images of children, young people and families are used only after their written permission has been obtained, and only for the purpose for which consent has been given.
* providing supervision, support and training for staff and volunteers about online safety.
* examining and risk assessing any social media platforms and new technologies before they are used within the organisation.

If online abuse occurs, we will respond to it by:

* applying the same safeguarding procedures that are in place for concerns and abuse reported to ParalympicsGB to online abuse.
* providing support and training for all staff and volunteers on dealing with all forms of abuse, including bullying or cyberbullying, emotional abuse, sexting, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.
* making sure our response takes the needs of the person experiencing abuse, any bystanders and our organisation as a whole into account.
* reviewing the plan developed to address online abuse at regular intervals, in order to ensure that any problems have been resolved in the long term.

# Appendix 5 - ParalympicsGB safeguarding procedure for concerns arising within a ParalympicsGB setting (e.g at Games-Time).



# Appendix 6 - ParalympicsGB safeguarding procedure for concerns about the behaviour of a ParalympicsGB member of staff/volunteer, towards a child/young person.

**Individual has a concern involving the behaviour of a ParalympicsGB member of staff.**

Recognises cause for concern, observes abuse/poor practice, receives a direct disclosure.

Consult with/report to LADO (in England). Initiate internal disciplinary investigation.

Appeal.

Investigation by statutory agencies.

Decision recorded.

No action required.

Outcome of statutory investigation and possible sanctions.

Alleged or suspected poor practice.

ParalympicsGB LSO or DSO notify Police and Child Services and LADO (in England). In consultation with statutory services, decision made about temporary suspension of ParalympicsGB staff member pending outcome of:

Outcome of internal investigations and any sanctions.

Alleged or suspected abuse.

Record incident on Safeguarding and Welfare Incident report form (Appendix 9).

If the child/young person requires immediate medical attention, call an ambulance and highlight that there is a child protection concern.

Contact **ParalympicsGB Lead Safeguarding Officer (LSO)- safeguarding@paralympics.org.uk**

LSO will make an initial assessment with the ParalympicsGB Case Management Group (unless immediate action is needed) on whether immediate statutory referral is required. If concerns are urgent and neither the LSO nor the Deputy LSO are available, refer immediately to Children’s Social Care/Police and inform LSO/Deputy LSO at earliest opportunity.

# Appendix 7 - ParalympicsGB safeguarding procedure for concerns about the behaviour of a staff member/ volunteer from an NGB or another organisation, towards a child/young person.

**Individual has a concern within a sport.**

Recognises cause for concern, observes abuse/poor practice, receives a direct disclosure.

Satisfied with NGB/employer response to disclosure?

**Suspected poor practice**

Referral to NGB/employer.

**No further action required.**

**Yes**

**No**

**Suspected poor practice**

Report to UK Sport/Sport England.

Consult with CPSU how to take forward.

**Suspected abuse**

Refer direct to Children’s Social Care/Police.

Report to UK Sport/Sport England.

Contact **ParalympicsGB Lead Safeguarding Officer (LSO) – safeguarding@paralympics.org.uk**

Who will make an initial assessment with the ParalympicsGB Case Management Group (unless immediate action is needed) on whether immediate statutory referral is required. If concerns are urgent and neither the LSO nor the Deputy LSO are available, refer immediately to Children’s Social Care/Police and inform LSO/Deputy LSO at earliest opportunity.

**No action required**

Decision recorded.

**Suspected Abuse**

Inform NGB/employer. Agree who will report to Children’s Social Care/Police.

Record incident on Safeguarding and Welfare Incident report form (Appendix 9).

If the child/young person requires immediate medical attention, call an ambulance and highlight that there is a child protection concern.

# Appendix 8 - ParalympicsGB safeguarding procedure for concerns arising from outside of sport.

**(e.g. at home, school or in the community)**

**Individual has a concern about a child outside sport.**

Recognises cause for concern, observes abuse/poor practice, receives a direct disclosure.

ParalympicsGB LSO will send written safeguarding report to Children’s Social Care / Police within 24 hours and consider need for support or advice for original referrer or others involved.

Contact **ParalympicsGB Lead Safeguarding Officer (LSO) – safeguarding@paralympics.org.uk**

Who will make an initial assessment with the ParalympicsGB Case Management Group (unless immediate action is needed) on whether immediate statutory referral is required. If concerns are urgent and neither the LSO nor the Deputy LSO are available, refer immediately to Children’s Social Care/Police and inform LSO/Deputy LSO at earliest opportunity.

Record incident on Safeguarding and Welfare Incident report form (Appendix 9).

If the child/young person requires immediate medical attention, call an ambulance and highlight that there is a child protection concern.

# Appendix 9 - Safeguarding and Welfare Incident Report

**This form should be completed by a DSO or LSO to log all safeguarding and welfare concerns.**

If you are a DSO, call the LSO to report the incident or concern and then complete and email the incident form. (**safeguarding@paralympics.org.uk**)

|  |
| --- |
| **Your information** |
| Name  |  |
| Address |  |
| Contact number(s)  |  |
| Email  |  |
| Name of organisation  |  | Your role |  |

|  |
| --- |
|  **Personal information – child / young person / adult** |
| Name  |  | Date of birth |  |
| Gender[[3]](#endnote-2) | Male¨ | Female¨ | Non-binary¨ | Another description (please state)¨ |
| Is there any information about the individual that would be useful to consider? |

|  |
| --- |
| **Contact information – parent / carer (if relevant)** |
| Name(s)  |  |
| Address |  |
| Contact number(s)  |  |
| Email  |  |
| Have they been notified of this incident? | No¨ |  | Please explain why this decision has been taken |
| Yes¨ |  | Please give details of what was said / actions agreed |

|  |
| --- |
| **Incident details\*** |
| Date and time of incident |  |
| Please tick one:  | ¨ | I am reporting my own concerns. | ¨ | I am responding to concerns raised by someone else – please fill in their details: |
| Name of person raising concern |  | Role within the sport or relationship to the individual |  |
| Contact number(s)  |  |
| Email  |  |
| Details of the incident or concerns (include other relevant information, such as description of any injuries and whether you are recording this incident as fact, opinion or hearsay) |

\* Attach a separate sheet if more space is required (e.g. multiple witnesses)

|  |
| --- |
| **Incident details (continued)** |
| Individual’s account of the incident |
| Please provide any witness accounts of the incident |
| Name of witness (and date of birth, if a child) |  | Role within the sport or relationship to the individual |  |
| Address |  |
| Contact number(s)  |  |
| Email  |  |
| Details of any person involved in this incident or alleged to have caused the incident / injury |
| Name (and date of birth, if a child) |  | Role within the sport or relationship to the individual |  |
| Address |  |
| Contact number(s)  |  |
| Email  |  |
| Please provide details of action taken to date  |
| Has the incident been reported to any external agencies? |  | No |  | Yes – please provide further details: |
| Name of organisation / agency |  |
| Contact person  |  |
| Contact number(s)  |  |
| Email  |  |
| Agreed action or advice given |

|  |
| --- |
| **Declaration** |
| Your signature |  |
| Print name |  |
| Today’s date |  |

|  |
| --- |
| Contact the ParalympicsGB Lead Safeguarding Officer in line with ParalympicsGB’s reporting procedures |
|  Safeguarding Officer’s name |  |
| Date reported |  |

1. The experience of children participating in organised sport in the UK (Kate Alexander Anne Stratford, Ruth Lewis, 2011) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. The experience of children participating in organised sport in the UK (Kate Alexander, Anne Stafford, Ruth Lewis 2011). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)