



Guardian Ballers CIC Safeguarding Policy

Children & Young People (ages 0-17 years)

Initially approved by board: October 2023

Review: Annually

Reviewed by/date: TH (director), HJ (Operations Manager), August 2025

Next review date: August 2026

This policy is to be read and understood in conjunction with the Guardian Ballers Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy

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SECTION 1 | CONTEXT AND CONTACTS

1.1 Introduction to the Company

The Guardian Ballers programme creates opportunities by blending basketball with mental and emotional well-being education sessions, to support young people aged 10-25 years to consider how they can BALL, BE and make their community BETTER.

Guardian Ballers CIC states that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind and recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people, by committing to practices which protect them.

1.2 Organisation Details

Registered Address of Organisation	Address of Office Base
Guardian Ballers CIC The Welcome Centre 47A Parkside, Coventry. CV1 2HG.	Bethel Church, 3-9 Spon End, Coventry. CV1 3HB.
Registration Number (Companies House)	14041987
Website Address:	https://guardianballers.org/
Email Address:	hello@guardianballers.org
Telephone Number:	+44 7311 387 241

1.3 Details of Safeguarding Leadership Team

Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mr Kieran Joseph, CEO and Founder	Kieran.Joseph@guardianballers.org 07502 371441
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mr Scott Neely, Projects Manager and Lead Deliverer	scott.neely@guardianballers.org 07855 340 722
Board Director as Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mr Oliver Bagg Chair of Board of Directors	Oliver.Bagg@guardianballers.org 07931 981 602

The DSLs will have full awareness of the policy and procedures guidelines and have attended training on safeguarding endorsed by the Local/National Safeguarding Board.

A copy of this Safeguarding Policy is available on request by emailing hello@guardianballers.org and is also available at the bottom of our website: <https://guardianballers.org/>

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1.4 Purpose of this Document

- to protect children and young people who receive Guardian Ballers CIC services from harm.
- to provide staff and volunteers, as well as children and young people and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection.

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of Guardian Ballers CIC, including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, contracted staff and students. It is acknowledged that any young person aged 17 or under that is functioning in a 'young leader' or voluntary assistance role is still classified as a young person (not an adult), and this policy applies to interactions with them.

1.5 Legal Context

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in England.

A summary of the key legislation and guidance is available from: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system>

Further Information

For a greater depth of understanding and practice, please see the following sources of information:

- safeguarding children who come from Black, Asian and minoritized ethnic communities
<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/children-from-black-asian-minoritised-ethnic-communities>
- safeguarding Deaf and disabled children and young people
<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/deaf-and-disabled-children>
- safeguarding LGBTQ+ children and young people
<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/lgbtq-children-young-people>
- safeguarding children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection-schools/safeguarding-children-with-special-educational-needs-and-disabilities-send>

Resources related to Safeguarding, Sport and Mental Health:

- [Safeguarding & Welfare - Think Active](#)
- [Mental health and physical activity toolkit | Mind](#)

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1.6 Definitions

Definition of “children”

A child for safeguarding purposes is any person between birth and under the age of 18 (0 to 17 years old). There are some exceptions to this: Children who are placed in local authority care are usually classed as children until aged 21, and those with some special needs are regarded as children while aged Under 25. Unborn children should also be considered in this policy.

Definition of abuse

Abuse of a child can take many forms. Abuse is a violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by any other person or persons. It can take a variety of forms and can be both overt and covert. This includes children witnessing the ill-treatment of others. The following list is not exhaustive but is illustrative of the kinds of abuse that might be experienced.

The categories of abuse and their definitions are given in the following document produced by the NSPCC: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/1188/definitions-signs-child-abuse.pdf>

They include:

- Physical (including Female Genital Mutilation and Honour Based Violence)
- Domestic Abuse
- Psychological
- Sexual abuse
- Financial or material abuse
- Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking
- Neglect & Acts of Omission
- Discrimination abuse
- Organisational abuse
- Self-Neglect
- Deprivation Of Liberty
- Exploitation

NB See also Appendix 1 for summary of common ‘Signs of Abuse’

1.7 Foundational statements

As Guardian Ballers Staff, we believe that:

- children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind.
- we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to adopt practices which protect them.

We recognise that:

- the welfare of children is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people’s welfare

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- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse
- some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- extra safeguards may be needed to keep children who are additionally vulnerable safe from abuse.

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

- valuing, listening to and respecting them
- appointing a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for children and young people, a Deputy (Deputy DSL) and a lead director responsible for safeguarding
- adopting child protection and safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- developing and implementing an effective online safety policy and related procedures
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures so that all staff and volunteers understand and follow our policies, procedures and behaviour codes
- implementing safer recruitment of staff and volunteers, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- recording, storing and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance
[more information is available from the Information Commissioner's Office: ico.org.uk/fororganisations]
- sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children and their families via leaflets, posters, group work and one-to-one discussions
- making sure that children, young people and their families know where to go for help if they have a concern
- using our safeguarding and child protection procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families and carers appropriately
- using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately
- creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise
- ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
- ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance;
- building a safeguarding culture where staff and volunteers, children, young people and their families, treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns.
- keeping records of concerns, discussions and decisions; designated safeguarding leads should keep records of the rationale for any decisions made.

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1.8 Standards / Code of Practice

(a) Guardian Ballers CIC staff, volunteers and contractors are required to adhere to the following standards/code of practice:

- Fully familiarise themselves with the content of this policy and procedures
- Where appropriate and required by regulations, undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Enhanced check when they commence employment/voluntary service. Where this has not been undertaken staff members will not be allowed to work with children unless supervised by a member of staff who has had a clear DBS check e.g. if a volunteer or contractor is supporting as a 'Guest', they will always be supervised by a member of staff who has passed an enhanced DBS check.
- Undertake relevant training in safeguarding, disclosure and diversity matters (safeguarding training every two years). Ask another member of staff if they have any uncertainties about how to deal with a specific service user.
- Ensure that all persons working for, or providing services to, Guardian Ballers CIC are provided with a briefing on these safeguarding policies and procedures before any work is undertaken or any services delivered.
- Report any incidents immediately to any relevant partners or commissioners.
- Demonstrate respect for all service users as individuals in all matters.
- Reflect on their own approach and style, recognising the inherent power their position bestows.
- Ensure that all service users experience a suitable and supportive environment to encourage service user disclosure of any issues which might affect the way in which they should be treated.
- Ensure a diverse range of services and training that is sensitive to difference.
- Invite and encourage constructive feedback from service users about standards and styles of behaviour and promote an open and honest culture of respect for diversity.
- Ensure all service users are aware of our Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion policy (accessible at bottom of Guardian Ballers website) and that they know how to complain (Complaints Policy at bottom of Guardian Ballers website) if they become victims of harassment bullying, unfair treatment or harassment.
- Deal with complaints of abuse, unfair treatment or harassment and bullying promptly, sensitively, confidentially and in accordance with procedures.

(b) Service users are required to:

- Aim to prevent inappropriate behaviour by challenging and reporting behaviour that appears to be causing distress to others.
- Support an open, constructive environment within which diversity is valued positively.

(c) Dealing with claims of abuse perpetrated by internal members of staff

This Policy makes it clear how staff are expected to perform when dealing with service users. It specifically ensures that claims made of abuse by internal staff will be investigated and dealt with.

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SECTION 2 | Procedures- Actions when there is disclosure/concern

- In the event of any concerns regarding a child with regards to the above or any other safeguarding issue then the DSL or deputy will be informed at the earliest opportunity.
- If necessary, the DSL will inform the relevant Social Services Department without delay and the management committee. The DSL will also ensure that the child protection policy and procedures are kept up to date, reviewed and signed off by the board of directors.
- If there are concerns about sharing the above information with a colleague you can contact the local safeguarding team (details below), or the police directly, or the NSPCC Child Protection Helpline on 0808 800 5000.

2.1 Disclosure First Response

If someone discloses that they are being abused, whether in the home or the setting, then upon receiving the information, you should:

- **React calmly**, even if you are feeling very different on the inside
- Reassure the child that they were right to tell you, they are not to blame, and take what the child says seriously
- **Keep questions to an absolute minimum** to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said. Don't forcefully ask for explicit details.
- Reassure but **do not promise confidentiality**, which may not be possible in order to ensure safety.
- Inform the child/young person what you will do next.
- Make a full and written record of what has been said/heard as soon as possible and **don't delay in passing on the information**.

EFFECTIVE LISTENING

- Ensure the physical environment is welcoming, giving opportunity for the child or vulnerable adult to talk in private but making sure others are aware the conversation is taking place.
- It is especially important to allow time and space for the person to talk.
- Above everything else, listen without interrupting
- Be attentive and look at them whilst they are speaking
- Show acceptance of what they say (however unlikely the story may sound) by reflecting back words or short phrases they have used
- Be honest and don't make promises you can't keep regarding confidentiality
- If they decide not to tell you after all, accept their decision but let them know that you are always ready to listen.
- Use language that is age appropriate and, for those with disabilities, ensure there is someone available who understands sign language, Braille etc.

HELPFUL RESPONSES/LANGUAGE

- You have done the right thing in telling someone
- Thank you for sharing this with someone

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- We have someone in Guardian Ballers who will help me think about what you've shared

DON'T SAY

- *Why didn't you tell anyone before?*
- *I can't believe it!*
- *Are you sure this is true?*
- *Why? How? When? Who? Where?*
- *I am shocked, don't tell anyone else*
- *I will help you sort this out*

If the child or young person asks you not to tell anyone and to keep it a secret, your response should be:

'Part of my job is to keep everyone safe and so I need to tell one of the Guardian Ballers leaders'

2.2 Recording the allegation/concern

The individual who first received/witnessed the concern should make a full written record of what was seen, heard and/or told as soon as possible after observing the incident/receiving the report. This is the 'report of the first account' and must be kept securely. It is important that the report is an accurate description.

Then, the DSL can support the witness during this process but must not complete the report for the witness.

The 'report of first account' and any further processed documents will be made available on request from either the police and/or social care teams and should aim to include:

1.	The allegation or concerns, including the date and time of the incident/allegation/disclosure
2.	The child or young person's name, age and date of birth
3.	The child or young person's home address and telephone number
4.	Whether or not the person making the report is expressing his or her own concerns or those of someone else, making a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
5.	What the child said about the abuse and how it occurred or what has been reported to you.
6.	The appearance and behaviour of the victim.
7.	Any injuries observed
8.	Details of witnesses to the incidents/ disclosure
9.	Have the parents been contacted? And if so, what has been said?
10.	Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record details
11.	Where possible, referral to the police or social services should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours and the name of the contact that took the referral should be recorded.
12.	Whether any other children are also at risk

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2.3 Disclosure Next steps

If you think abuse has, or may have, occurred act immediately. It is the responsibility of the person first becoming aware of a situation where there may be a child subject to, or at risk of, abuse to make safe and deal with the immediate needs of the person. This may mean taking reasonable steps to ensure the child is in no immediate danger and seeking medical treatment if required as a matter of urgency.

DO NOT discuss the allegation of abuse with the alleged perpetrator.

DO NOT disturb or destroy articles that could be used in evidence. Where an assault of some kind is suspected do not wash or bathe the person unless this is associated with first aid treatment necessary to prevent further harm.

DO NOT discuss concerns or disclosures with other members of staff other than the DSL.

If the allegation is about a staff member or volunteer of any organisation, ensure that the allegation is properly managed. Tell your DSL or deputy DSL if your safeguarding lead is unavailable or is implicated in the allegation.

Safeguarding Team Contact Details are at the front of the Policy.

Contact the police if it is thought a crime has just been committed.

Call 101 or 999 in an emergency.

2.4 Response if the allegation is against a member of staff, a volunteer, or a service user of Guardian Ballers CIC

Guardian Ballers CIC will ensure that any allegations made against representatives of Guardian Ballers will be dealt with swiftly and in accordance with these procedures:

- The worker must ensure that the child is safe and away from the person against whom the allegation is made.
- The DSL for safeguarding should be informed immediately.
- In the case of an allegation involving the DSL, contact the deputy safeguarding lead or, in their absence, the lead director if they are independent of the allegations being made.
- The DSL should contact the relevant safeguarding team (see contact details below) for advice on how to proceed with the immediate situation. Outside of working hours the Emergency Duty Team can give advice and/or in the event of an emergency situation arising, the police.
- The individual who first received/witnessed the concern should make a full written record of what was seen, heard and/or told as soon as possible after observing the incident/receiving the report. This is the 'report of the first account'. It is important that the report is an accurate description. The DSL (if appropriate) can support the worker during this process but must not complete the report for the worker. This report must be made available on request from either the police and/or social services.
- Regardless of whether a Police and/or Social Services investigation follows, Guardian Ballers CIC will ensure that an internal investigation takes place and consideration is given to the

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operation of disciplinary procedures. This may involve an immediate suspension and/or ultimate dismissal dependent on the nature of the incident.

- **Whistle blowing will not prejudice the position or prospects of Guardian Ballers CIC staff or volunteers.**

SECTION 3 | Responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Safeguarding team/s

It is the responsibility of the Safeguarding Lead to:

1. Keep up to date with relevant training and developments by subscribing to and/or reviewing updates by the safeguarding boards in the areas of operation.
2. Decide without delay on the most appropriate course of action once the allegation or suspicion of abuse has been raised, such as:
 - Physical (including Female Genital Mutilation and Honour Based Violence)
 - Domestic Abuse
 - Psychological
 - Sexual abuse
 - Financial or material abuse
 - Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking
 - Neglect & Acts of Omission
 - Discrimination abuse
 - Organisational abuse
 - Self-Neglect
 - Exploitation
 - Deprivation Of Liberty
3. Deal with any immediate needs:
 - Ensure that the victim of the alleged abuse is safe
 - Ensure that any necessary emergency medical treatment is arranged
 - Ensure that no forensic evidence is lost
 - If the alleged perpetrator is also a child, ensure that another member of staff/manager is allocated to attend to their needs and ensure that other service users are not put at risk.
 - Clarify the facts stated by the member of staff, volunteer or contractor but do NOT in any circumstances discuss the allegation of abuse with the alleged perpetrator or, if possible, the victim.
 - Check that the circumstances fall within the safeguarding children procedure. i.e., meeting the definition of abuse as defined in this Policy (and supporting documents).
 - Address issues of consent and confidentiality, taking care not to promise confidentiality
 - A formal referral must be made on the same day as the alert is raised.
 - Where a decision is made NOT to refer, the safeguarding allegation/concern must be recorded, with the reasons for the decision not to refer.

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- All incidents, allegations of abuse and complaints must be recorded, monitored and available for internal and external audit.

The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse / concerns should report concerns as soon as possible to:

1 st Point of contact	Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mr Kieran Joseph, CEO and Founder	Kieran.Joseph@guardianballers.org 07502 371441
If DSL is not available	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mr Scott Neely, Projects Manager and Lead Deliverer	scott.neely@guardianballers.org 07855 340 722
If allegation is about DSL or DSL	Board Director as Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mr Oliver Bagg	Oliver.Bagg@guardianballers.org 07931 981 602

The Safeguarding Leadership team may need to inform others depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the allegations or suspicions of abuse / concerns

3.2 The Referral Stage

Services for Children and Young People, Children's Social Care, have a statutory duty under The Children Act 1989 to ensure the welfare of a child.

When a child protection referral is made, they have a legal responsibility to investigate and all agencies have a duty to co-operate with those investigations. This may involve talking to the child and their family, and gathering information from other people who know the child.

Enquiries may be carried out jointly with the police and/or M.A.S.H. services.

Concerns about children must not be taken lightly, which may involve escalation of bringing the concern regarding alleged abuse or potential abuse formally to the attention of the following authorities as appropriate:

CONTACT DETAILS

Reporting to the police: call 101 and state your concerns.

In Emergency: Dial 999

For advice/to discuss concerns:

Call Childline on 0800 1111

Call the NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000

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e.g if you are not sure whether your concerns are justified, you would like more information about issues like confidentiality or you would like to know what happens next (after you have reported your concerns)

Council/Children's Services Sources of Support:

Coventry City Council (Guardian Ballers CIC Lead City)	Warwickshire (Guardian Ballers CIC Lead County)
Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) of Children's Services: Daytime Tel: 024 7678 8555 Out of hours Tel: 024 7683 2222	Warwickshire Children and Families Front Door (Front Door): 01926 414144. (Mon-Thurs 8.30 - 5.30, Frid 8.30 - 5.00 Emergency Duty Team (out of hours): 01926 886922.
mash@coventry.gov.uk	Child at immediate risk: call 999
https://www.coventry.gov.uk/safeguardingchildren (MARF Form Link located here) https://www.coventry.gov.uk/safeguarding-adults-1/worried-someone-know-harmed-neglected	https://www.safeguardingwarwickshire.co.uk/safeguarding-children
Police Child Abuse Investigation Unit: (024) 7653 9044	

Include this information in a referral:

- The name of the child
- Date of birth and age
- Address and telephone number
- Why the child is considered to be at risk

3.3 The Referral: what happens next

Once a referral has been made a decision will be made and one of the following actions will be taken:

- At the end of the referral discussion, the referrer and Children's social care should be clear about the proposed action, who will be taking it, timescales and whether no further action will be taken.

Referral outcomes about a child, where there may be concerns, typically fall into 4 categories and pathways:

- 1) No further action, which may include information to signpost to other agencies;
- 2) Early help - referrals for intervention and prevention services within the Common Assessment Framework and Early Help services range of provision;
- 3) Child in Need services - assessment to be undertaken by Children's Social Care (Section 17 CA 1989);

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- 4) Child Protection services - assessment and child protection enquiries to be undertaken by Children's Social Care (Section 47 CA 1989) with active involvement of other agencies such as the police.

SECTION 4 | Practices to minimise risk

4.1 Safer Recruitment

The Leadership will ensure all workers will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safe recruitment. This includes ensuring that:

- There is a written job description / person specification for the post (in the context of volunteers, this may simply be displayed on the website)
- Those applying have completed a form of application or self declaration form
- Those shortlisted have been interviewed (in the context of volunteers, this may be a phonecall or if the applicant is well-known to Guardian Ballers staff, they can give approval)
- Safeguarding has been discussed at interview
- Written references have been obtained, and followed up where appropriate
- A disclosure and barring check has been completed where necessary (we will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information)
- Qualifications, where relevant, have been verified (not relevant to volunteers)
- A suitable training programme is provided for the successful applicant (e.g. Safeguarding training)
- The applicant has completed a probationary period (e.g. Guest appearance)
- The applicant has been given a copy of the organisation's safeguarding policy, agreed to adhering and knows how to report concerns.

4.2 Safeguarding Training

The Leadership is committed to on-going safeguarding training and development opportunities for all workers, developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone. All our workers will receive induction training and undertake safeguarding training on a regular basis.

The Leadership will also ensure that children and adults with care and support needs are provided with information on where to get help and advice in relation to abuse, discrimination, bullying or any other matter where they have a concern.

4.3 Practice Guidelines

As an organisation working with children, young people and adults with care and support needs we wish to operate and promote good working practice. This will enable workers to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false or unfounded accusation.

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All workers are expected to follow the guidelines in Safer Working Practises contained in the Appendix of this policy.

4.4 Management of Workers: Codes of Conduct

As a Leadership we are committed to supporting all workers and ensuring they receive support and supervision.

- All staff complete Level 1 training on Safer Working Practises towards children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- All adults working with children, young people and vulnerable adults are in a position of trust. All those in positions of trust need to understand the power this can give them over those they care for and the responsibility they have because of this relationship.
- It is vital that all workers ensure they do not, even unknowingly, use their position of power and authority inappropriately. They should always maintain professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which could be misinterpreted.

4.5 Working in Partnership

The diversity of organisations and settings means there can be great variation in practice when it comes to safeguarding children, young people and adults. This can be because of cultural tradition, belief and religious practice or understanding, for example, of what constitutes abuse.

We will ask to see the Safeguarding Policy of any potential partner to ensure that Safeguarding Policy and Procedure is in place.

It is also our expectation that any organisation providing activities with Guardian Ballers children, youth or adults with support needs, as part of the letting agreement will have their own policy that meets this policy's safeguarding standards.

We believe good communication is essential in promoting safeguarding, both to those we wish to protect, to everyone involved in working with children and adults, and to all those with whom we work in partnership. This safeguarding policy is one of several methods of promoting safeguarding.

ADOPTION OF THE POLICY

This policy was agreed by the leadership and will be reviewed annually.

Signed by:
PRINT NAME: Kieran Joseph

Date:
Position: Designated Safeguarding Lead

Signed by:
PRINT NAME: SCOTT NEELY

Date:
Position: Deputy Safeguarding Lead

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APPENDICES

1. Signs of Possible Abuse (children & young people)
2. Safer Working Practices
3. Guidelines for the use of Direct messaging with under 18s
4. Example Safeguarding Decision-Making Flowchart
5. Safeguarding Record Form
6. Incident & Injury Form

APPENDIX 1

Signs of Possible Abuse (Children and Young People)

The following signs could be indicators that abuse has taken place but should be considered in context of the child's whole life.

For more detailed descriptions of signs of abuse, please see the following document produced by NSPCC: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/1188/definitions-signs-child-abuse.pdf>

Physical

- Injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries that occur in places not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc
- Injuries that have not received medical attention
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained tummy pains
- Bruises on babies, bites, burns, fractures etc which do not have an accidental explanation
- Cuts/scratches/substance abuse*

Sexual

- Any allegations made concerning sexual abuse
- Excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour
- Age-inappropriate sexual activity through words, play or drawing
- Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations
- Eating disorders - anorexia, bulimia*

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Emotional

- Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging.
- Depression, aggression, extreme anxiety.
- Nervousness, frozen watchfulness
- Obsessions or phobias
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults
- Attention-seeking behaviour
- Persistent tiredness
- Running away/stealing/lying

Neglect

- Under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, inadequate care, etc.

Exploitation

- Displaying inappropriate behaviour for their age, see this document: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/harmful-sexual-behaviour/>
- Being fearful of certain people and/or situations
- Displaying significant changes in emotional wellbeing
- Being isolated from peers/usual social networks
- Being increasingly secretive
- Having money or new things (such as clothes or a mobile phone) that they can't explain
- Spending time with older individuals or groups

* These indicate the possibility that a child or young person is self-harming. Approximately 20,000 are treated in accident and emergency departments in the UK each year.

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APPENDIX 2

Safer Working Practices

These guidelines are presented to reduce the risk or likelihood of poor or illegal practice to keep children, young people and adults as safe as practicably possible.

- Be mindful of the safety of children and adults with additional care and support needs at all times and in all circumstances.
- Workers should treat all children and adults with additional care and support needs with dignity and respect in attitude, language used and actions.
- If transporting a children (under 18), it must only be done so under 'Guardian Ballers' events if parent permission is recorded or witnessed/known by at least two leaders (e.g. if a young person is unsafe at night and a phonecall is known to be had with parent/carer consenting to a lift). If, as 'last course of action', you are transporting a child (under 18) it is always advisable to have another helper/team member with you or ensure that the last two children are dropped off together. However, if you must transport a child on your own, first consider the level of need/urgency and risk with the staff team leader (or another staff member) and have the young person sit in the back seat. Judge the situation for yourself when it comes to an adult with additional care and support needs but err on the side of caution. (Remember an allegation could also be made against you!)
- Be wise in your relationships with children and adults with additional care and support needs. Avoid being over-friendly with some, and less friendly with others. Don't have favourites.
- If you feel that a child or adult with additional care and support needs gives you an inappropriate amount of attention or may have a 'crush' on you, speak to your leader or line manager about this.
- Avoid being on your own with any child or adult with additional care and support needs. This may mean groups working in one large room or adjoining rooms.
- Always have 2 adults present with a group in a single enclosed space / room, ideally a male and a female if the group is mixed.
- For ages 9-12 years- ratio is recommended as one adult to eight children. For ages 13-18 years- ratio is recommended as one adult to ten children.
- Where confidentiality is important (e.g. in counselling a young person) ensure that others know that the conversation is taking place. Use a public location where possible, or a room with external visibility where someone else is present in the building.

Use of toilets

Assistance with toileting should be appropriate and related to the age/needs of the child. In most contexts, Guardian Ballers able-bodied young people may only need directing towards the outside of the toilets. You should not enter the toilet with them, where possible. In all environments where the

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facilities enable, young people and staff will use different toilets (e.g. staff use disabled toilets and young people use general toilets).

For children with special needs an agreement with parents/carers will be made and documented as to how the child's toileting requirements will be met.

- Take care with the use of physical touch. (See next section).
- If at any time, you feel unsure what is wise in a situation, always ask a senior team member or a team leader before acting.
- Children should not be taken on trips or away from the premises (which are organised by Guardian Ballers) without permission of parents/carers or prior public plans of Guardian Ballers.
- In the context of a 1-to-1 intervention or service delivery, aim to deliver it in a public and visible setting e.g. with door open to others, in hearing distance of others.
In the context where other adults are not around, CCTV should be active and a heightened level of risk assessment conducted for the setting and user.

Taking Care with Physical contact/Touching

- Keep everything public. Physical contact in the context of a group can be considered very different from a physical contact behind closed doors.
- It is recommended that where possible, a staff member asks what physical contact is preferred. E.g. "Do you prefer hand shakes / fist pumps / high fives?"
These 3 forms of hand contact are preferred and common during introductions or to provide encouragements.
- Touch should be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the child or adult with additional care and support needs, rather than the team member/worker.
- Avoid any physical activity that may be potentially sexually stimulating, e.g. tickling or other actions / activities that could be easily misread as over familiar)
- In the context where a user may try to initiate a 'hug', it is recommended that the staff member try to adapt the contact to an one-armed side hug or handshake/fist pump/high five.
- All children and adults with additional care and support needs are entitled to personal privacy and the right to decide how much physical contact they have with others, except in circumstances such as a medical emergency.

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- When giving First Aid (or applying sun cream etc), encourage the child or adult with additional care and support needs to do what they can themselves but, in their best interests giving appropriate help where necessary. Do not apply sun cream to sensitive areas of their body, unless parental/carer consent.
- Team members should monitor one another in relation to physical contact. They should be free to help each other by constructively challenging anything which could be misunderstood or misconstrued. Any concerns about team members should be reported to the Team Leader.
- Concerns about abuse should always be reported, per abuse definitions of this policy.

Helping to encourage appropriate behaviour and positive engagement

- Every person is unique and will respond in different ways to different forms of behaviour management. It follows therefore each child should be dealt with on an individual basis.
- All children and adults with additional care and support needs should be treated with respect. During sessions group members should respect each other by using appropriate language (e.g. no swearing or racist language, not calling each other unkind names) and appropriate actions (e.g. respecting property and each other's personal space).
- Do not compare a child/adult with additional care and support needs with another in the group; rather encourage and affirm and, if possible, give them appropriate responsibility for tasks.
- Build healthy relationships and be a good role model by setting an example. You can't expect others to observe the ground rules if you break them yourself.
- Take care to give the quieter individuals attention and resist allowing the demanding individuals to take all your time and energy.
- Be consistent in what you say and ensure that other team members know what you have said. This avoids manipulation.
- If children or adults with additional care and support needs are bored they can often show behaviours which may be disruptive. Keep your session engaging and review your programme regularly.
- Never smack or hit anyone and don't shout. Change voice tone if necessary.
- Call on support from other leaders if you feel so angry or upset you may deal with the situation unwisely. Be aware of your own emotions and reactions.

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For those who continue to display challenging behaviour

We request that parents/carers and schools/organisations disclose children and young people's needs upon registration. Thus, staff leaders should assess and plan for required support to staff members (e.g. SEN and Behavioural needs).

Challenging behaviour can be more difficult to cope with. Children who are displaying more challenging behaviour may not listen or respond well to further instructions. You may need to have assistance from a more experienced leader in the room.

- Have them sit right in front of you or get a helper to sit next to them.
- Encourage helpers to be pro-active rather than waiting to be told to deal with a situation.
- Challenge them to change their behaviour whilst encouraging their strengths.
- Explain to them one of the leaders may speak to their parents/carers about their behaviour and they may not be able to attend further sessions. It may be that the child will be collected from the session by their parent or carer.
- In serious extreme circumstances, the police will be called to manage a situation.

Maintaining Standards in Practice

- Anyone seeing another worker acting in a way that could be misinterpreted should speak to the individual or their leader/line manager about the concern. (A serious concern regarding conduct should be reported immediately to the leader/line manager.)
- Teams should meet regularly to review procedures ensuring a common approach, sharing concerns and identifying other matters which may need clarification and guidance. This should include safeguarding and linked issues. This will occur amidst employed staff (Team meetings) and volunteers (Leaders Gatherings).
- Team leaders should keep brief records of issues discussed or decisions made at workers' meetings for later reference.
- In emergency situations when departure from these guidelines becomes necessary, the episode must be reported back to your immediate team leader. This provides protection for you and draws the leadership's attention to shortcomings in procedure and potential problem areas. Note- There should be more deviance from the policy, but it is acknowledged that their 'safer working guidelines' may not include all eventualities and scenarios.
- All concerns, accidents or injuries, notable incidents or near misses should be recorded in the appropriate manner to ensure accountability and transparency.

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APPENDIX 3

Guidelines for Direct Messaging with under 18s

The Safeguarding policy carries the principle guideline that no adults should ever be alone with an under 18 (or 18 year old in school year 13). This limits any occasion for grooming or abuse and indeed protects the adult from false allegation. We are seeking to create a culture where there is no engagement between adults and under 18s that takes place in a setting that is not visible, accountable or public.

We are conscious of the challenge posed by the use of social media and in some settings the need to contact under 18s on their own mobile device by text, responding to a Social Media DM or WhatsApp. These media provide a setting for interaction which is both private and unaccountable. For this reason we have developed the following guidelines:

Staff should aim, as much as practicably possible, not to interact with an under 18 apart from in sessions. But if it is required, to interact with under 18s via email (preferably one which the under 18 has associated to their educational provider) and with another Guardian Ballers email account attached (e.g. CC: a staff member or hello@guardianballers.org).

It is noted that the legal age requirement to use WhatsApp was changed to 16 for those in the European Union from the end of May 2018.

With reference to interactions by text message, responding Social Media DM's or WhatsApp we suggest the following guidelines:

- 1) It is noted that the main areas in which Guardian Ballers staff might interact directly with an under 18 would only be within young leaders/volunteers gatherings or when enquires are made online.
- 2) We recommend that there be no direct communication with young people under the age of 16 or outside of these settings. It is recommended that all interactions that take place are in some way made accountable and visible. This could be done by creating a joint text group or a WhatsApp group with at least 2 DBS checked team members included in the group. All communications with the young person should be posted in this group setting to avoid any unaccountable contact. Adding a parent or carer to a group could also provide appropriate accountability but this may not be desirable to the young person.
- 3) There should be no direct messaging of an under 16 except in a group text with one of the young person's parents or carers also in the group.
The only exception to this would be the responding to information requests regarding services (e.g. "What are the details for the community Hub?").

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- 4) If any 16-18's are invited to join a Whatsapp group, it will be explained to them that all others in the group will have access to their phone number and their verbal permission will be sought before activating the group.
- 5) In contexts such as the 'Guardian Ballers Leaders' whatsapp group, where there is a mix of adult and under 18 members, both parties agree to not acquiring contacts or making contact with those whom they did not have contact prior to them joining the whatsapp group (unless subsequent consent is given).
N.B. In some contexts, young leaders may be previously known by staff (e.g. 'family friends' prior to Guardian Ballers involvement) but it is still necessary for an additional written record of parent consent for staff to communicate with the young leader.
- 6) We strongly advise that there should be no direct messaging from an adult to any under 18 unless specific permission has been sought and obtained from the young person's parents. Even if permission has been granted (written record), it is recommended that an accountable form of communication (as described above and below), is used in preference to an unaccountable form.
- 7) Should a young person reach out to a leader or other adult (without prior consent from adults to do so) to seek to engage with direct messaging (DM) for some sort of interaction or support, it is recommended that the adult reply with the following response,

"Thank you for your message. To keep everyone safe from a safeguarding perspective, Guardian Ballers leaders try to avoid DM's with under18's. Could you message via email or ask your parent/carer to contact me so we can arrange the best way to communicate?"

If the young person doesn't wish to do this and continues to contact the adult directly then the adult should request the young person's permission to add another adult to a form of chat/group or email thread. Should the young person decline, the adult should inform their leader, line manager or a member of safeguarding team that the interaction has taken place and seek their advice as to whether to continue or close down the interaction, depending upon the nature and urgency of the conversation. It is very important to share that this messaging has taken place and for the leader informed to log this in an email to a ministry leader.

It might be recommended that the adult offers to arrange to meet (in a public space- see guidance above), to further the conversation in person at an appropriate time. Such a meeting could then take place following the usual guidelines in the safeguarding policy i.e. making sure another youth leader knows that the meeting is taking place, and meeting in a setting that is public and visible albeit where a private conversation can take place.

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8) If an under 18 sends a direct message to an adult relating to Safeguarding concerns, then the adult should inform their leader, line manager and/or safeguarding leader (as appropriate) that these interactions are taking place and log any concerns as directed in this policy.

If, for any reason, it is necessary to call a young person on the phone (or has been requested and/or permission granted by the young person's parents), this should be done with a written record/note made to another accountable staff member.

It is also recommended that any phone, text or Whatsapp communication between adults and under 18's should take place either after 8:30am or before 8:30pm in the evening to keep any interaction within a daytime context.

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APPENDIX 4

Example Safeguarding Decision Making Flow Chart

A child / young person tells you (**in person, via a chat or message**) something that has happened to them or something they have done or been involved in. This is called a disclosure. You hear something in a conversation (**online or in person**) which concerns you.

e.g:

A young person shares a point of view which is offensive to someone else

Language which is not appropriate

You see something that concerns you (in person or online) e.g:

Something in the background on screen

A bruise or injury

When online, you see something on screen which concerns you e.g:

A person in the background

Something on a t-shirt (offensive words)

A photo or image on display

IMPORTANT – Safeguarding concerns are all very different. If you have any doubts you must fill in a Safeguarding Concern Form,



*If the child or young person asks you not to tell anyone and to keep it a secret. Then your response should be:
'Part of my role at Guardian Ballers is to keep everyone safe and so I need to tell one of the Guardian Ballers leaders'*

OR

You are worried about the young person.
You have a feeling that something isn't right.
You aren't sure what to do



Speak to the leader of the session as soon as possible.



As soon as you (the person who saw / heard the concern) can write down (in bullet points) as much as you can with any dates, times and names

Use the words / language that was said directly to you by the young person or describe what you saw
Focus on facts

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Your team leader will ask you complete/share a Safeguarding Record form. It is very important that you do this as soon as possible.



The Team leader will decide if the Safeguarding Lead needs to be phoned straight away on about the concern

Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mr Kieran Joseph, CEO and Founder	Kieran.Joseph@guardianballers.org 07502 371441
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mr Scott Neely, Projects Manager and Lead Deliverer	scott.neely@guardianballers.org 07855 340 722



The Safeguarding Lead may speak to you directly about the concern.

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APPENDIX 5

Safeguarding Record Form

SAFEGUARDING RECORD

The completed form should be completed by the session leader, or given to the session leader or directly to the DSL.
If a digital version of the form is shared, you must ensure that the relevant person confirms they have received the record.

WHAT TO RECORD (Delete as required): Medical incident/Safeguarding concerns/Other*

Date of incident:		Session/Programme	
Location of Incident:		Session Leader	
Record given to (Staff) and How:		Follow up required? (Yes/No)	

Child's Full Name		Age (yrs)/ School Year	
Description of Incident/Cause for Concern			
Witnesses to Incident/Cause for Concern			
Concern documented by			
Signature			
Date			

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ACTION TAKEN: During the Event/Incident	
<i>Enter Text here:</i>	
Action taken by	
Signature	
Date	

Any follow-up action (eg follow up reporting, contacting family, measures to reduce likelihood of recurrence)	
<i>Enter Text here:</i>	
Decision discussed with:	
Decision determined by	
Signature	
Date	

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APPENDIX 6

Incident & Injury Form

For accidents, injuries, or near misses during programme delivery.

(**NB** For safeguarding concerns please, use Safeguarding Incident Reporting Form, Appendix 5)

Details of injured person	
Name:	
Status of person: (Circle or Add)	Young Person (age 17 and under) GB Staff GB Volunteer GB Contractor Member of the public Other, Please state:
Date of birth:	
Home address:	
Details of person completing the form	
Name:	
Role/Status of Adult:	GB Staff GB Volunteer

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(Aged 18 and over)	GB Contractor Member of the public Other, Please state:
Contact details:	
Date of completing form:	
Details of first aid treatment (to be completed by first aider or appointed person)	
Precise nature of injury:	
Did the injured person receive first aid treatment?	Yes / No
If yes, give details:	
Was the injured person taken to hospital?	Yes / No
If yes, give details of the name and address of the hospital:	
Advice/Guidance Given <i>(Detail any advice, guidance or instructions provided to the</i>	

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individual(s) involved in response to this incident)	
Agreed Action/Response <i>(Did the individual agree to follow the advice?)</i>	Yes / No
Follow-up Required? (yes/no) <i>(Is follow-up needed to ensure advice has been acted upon?)</i>	Yes / No If yes: Named responsible person _____ By when? _____
Signed: (First aider or appointed person) Date:	
Details of the accident	
Address of location where the accident/ incident occurred	

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