

# SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES



Department of Education, Sport and Culture

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# RECOGNISING SIGNS OF ABUSE

As outlined in the Safeguarding & Protecting Children workshops attended by all IOM Sport staff, there are 4 categories of child abuse:

## 1. Neglect

Includes situations in which adults fail to meet a child's basic physical needs (e.g. for food or warm clothing), consistently leave children alone and unsupervised, fail or refuse to give children love, affection or attention.

Neglect in a sports situation might also occur if a teacher or coach fails to ensure children are safe or expose them to unnecessary cold or risk of injury.

## 2. Physical Abuse

Includes situations in which adults physically hurt or injure children (e.g. by hitting, shaking, squeezing, biting or burning), giving them alcohol, inappropriate drugs or poison or attempting to suffocate or drown children.

In sports situations, physical abuse may also occur if performance enhancing drugs are used, or when the nature and intensity of training exceeds the capacity of the child's immature and growing body.

## 3. Sexual Abuse

Boys and girls are sexually abused when adults (male or female) use them to meet their own sexual needs.

This could include:

Full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, fondling, showing children pornographic books, photographs or videos, or taking pictures for pornographic purposes.

Sports situations which involve physical contact (e.g. supporting or guiding children) could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. Abusive situations may also occur if adults misuse their power over young people.

#### 4. Emotional Abuse

This can occur in a number of ways, for example where:

- There is persistent lack of love and affection
- There is constant overprotection which prevents children from socialising
- Children are frequently being shouted at or taunted
- There is bullying, neglect, physical or sexual abuse

Emotional abuse in sport may also include situations where parents or coaches subject children to constant criticism, bullying or unrealistic pressure to perform to high expectations.

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 verbal, written or physical – and increasingly includes online and social media activity.

Forms of bullying can include:

- Physical assaults
- Name-calling, sarcasm and racist taunts
- Threats and gestures
- Unwanted physical contact
- Graffiti
- Stealing or hiding personal items
- Being ostracised or ignored

## TYPICAL SIGNS OF ABUSE

IOM Sport staff are encouraged not to ignore signs of abuse in children attending IOM Sport led activities or who are using IOM Sport facilities or services. Such signs are as follows:

- Unexplained bruising or injuries
- Sexually explicit language/actions
- Sudden changes in behaviour
- Something a child has said
- A change observed over a long period of time

Note: The above signs in isolation may not constitute abuse. You should be aware of specific behaviour changes in a child or for a cluster of the above signs.

If in doubt NOT passing on your concerns is NOT an option. Please contact one of the Designated Safeguarding Officers, Paul Jones, Gianni Epifani or Lesley Cunningham.

# HOW TO REACT TO A SAFEGUARDING INCIDENT

There are a number of different reasons which may lead to a member of IOM Sport staff being faced with a decision to report a Safeguarding incident. It is important to understand the differences and to recognise what needs to be done in each case. The 3 main scenarios are as follows:

1. A child or young person makes a disclosure of abuse which is UNRELATED to IOM Sport or its employees, third party providers or volunteers.
2. You have concerns that a child or young person is being abused or you have witnessed an incident of abuse by a parent / carer / another child or young person or someone else NOT connected with IOM Sport.
3. An allegation of abuse is made against an employee, third party provider or volunteer of IOM Sport.

IOM Sport staff are encouraged to take the following actions in each of the 3 scenarios of safeguarding incidents:

## DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE UNRELATED TO IOM SPORT

Actions that IOM Sport staff SHOULD take:

- Listen carefully to what the child has to say and reassure the child they have done the right thing in telling. Undue and leading questions must be avoided as this could seriously prejudice any investigation. The child should never be asked to repeat their story to a colleague
- The child is likely to have doubts and fears about what will happen and will need support. Be open and honest and explain to the child what is to happen next. This is essential if the child's trust is to be gained. Therefore, promises to keep information secret must not be made and the child must be told that the information will be passed on
- There are particular issues with regard to gaining information from children with limited communication skills or special educational needs, and care should be taken that appropriate means are used to understand what is being said without 'leading' the child
- Contact one of the Designated Safeguarding Officers immediately stating that you wish to discuss a referral of possible child abuse and complete the IOMS Safeguarding Incident form with a Designated Safeguarding Officer. The Designated Safeguarding Officers are:

Paul Jones (Sport Aid) – 688595 / [Paul.Jones2@gov.im](mailto:Paul.Jones2@gov.im)

Gianni Epifani (MSR) – 688556 / [Gianni.Epifani@gov.im](mailto:Gianni.Epifani@gov.im)

Lesley Cunningham (MSR) - 686852 / [Lesley.Cunningham@gov.im](mailto:Lesley.Cunningham@gov.im)

- Record all that the child has said on the Safeguarding Incident Report form, the exact questions asked and the answers given – using the same vocabulary as the child. New words should never be introduced in talking to the child or in recording. The recording should be completed as soon as possible and always on the same working day. It should be dated and signed

Actions that IOM Sport staff SHOULD AVOID taking:

- Panic
- Allow their shock or distaste to show
- Probe for more information than is offered (DO NOT investigate)
- Speculate or make assumptions
- Make negative comments about the alleged abuser
- Approach the alleged abuser
- Make promises or agree to keep a secret

## **CONCERNS/SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE NOT CONNECTED WITH IOM SPORT**

It is not the responsibility of anyone working for IOM Sport (in a paid or voluntary capacity), or those working in affiliated organisations, to take responsibility or to decide whether or not child abuse is taking place / has taken place.

However, there is a responsibility to report concerns in order that appropriate agencies can make enquiries and take any necessary action to protect the young person.

Actions:

- Contact one of the Designated Safeguarding Officers immediately stating that you wish to discuss concerns regarding possible child abuse and complete the IOMS Safeguarding Incident form with a Designated Safeguarding Officer
- When meeting with the Designated Safeguarding Officer they will provide advice regarding which agencies should be contacted (see section 'Appropriate Agencies')
- If for any reason none of the Designated Safeguarding Officers are available, advice can be sought from the DESC Safeguarding Officer, Children & Families Division, The Police or the NSPCC Helpline (see section 'Expert Advice')

Where an individual reports a concern/suspicion of abuse to any IOM Sport employee, third party provider or volunteer and the concern/suspicion is not connected with IOM Sport, the individual will be advised to report their concern/suspicion via the appropriate channel (e.g. Club or Governing Body of Sport (GBS) or National Governing Body of Sport (NGB) Welfare Officer, Children & Families Division, the Police or NSPCC). IOM Sport staff, third party providers or volunteers will not report concerns or suspicions on behalf of individuals.

## ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST AN IOM SPORT EMPLOYEE/VOLUNTEER

If the allegation is made by the child / young person themselves, the member of staff dealing with the safeguarding incident should take the following actions:

- Listen carefully and record exactly what the child / young person says using their own words
- Ensure that the child / young person is removed from the situation
- Do not approach or tell the employee concerned about the allegation
- Report the matter immediately to one of the Designated Safeguarding Officers
- If for any reason none of the Designated Safeguarding Officers are available or the concern is related to one of the Designated Safeguarding Officers, report to the DESC Safeguarding Officer or one of the expert agencies detailed in 'Expert Advice'

If the allegation is made by a parent / carer / other adult, the member of staff dealing with the safeguarding incident should take the following actions:

- Where possible, involve one of the Designated Safeguarding Officers in dealing with the allegation and complete a IOMS Safeguarding Incident form
- Advise the person making the allegation that the matter will be dealt with promptly in accordance with the IOM Sport Safeguarding Procedures and that a referral may have to be made to appropriate external agencies (see section 'Appropriate Agencies')
- Advise the person that they will be contacted by one of the Designated Safeguarding Officers AS SOON AS POSSIBLE
- Do not allow the person making the allegation to have contact with the employee against whom the allegation has been made
- Ensure that the child / young person is removed from the situation
- Do not tell the employee who has had the allegation made against them about the incident (or indeed any other colleagues)

In the event of an allegation against an IOM Sport employee the DESC Managing Allegations against Staff Flowchart can be followed (see POL20d\_DESC Managing Allegations Flowchart).

## IMPORTANT NOTES RELATING TO ALL SAFEGUARDING INCIDENTS

- Any issue relating to safeguarding must be dealt with **sensitively** and **confidentially**
- **Only discuss the matter with (and circulate information to) those people who NEED to know**
- If any other situation arises which is not detailed by one of the above 3 scenarios, please contact one of the Designated Safeguarding Officers for advice

# APPROPRIATE AGENCIES

There are a number of 'appropriate agencies' that could be contacted in the event of a safeguarding incident. Advice should be sought from one of the Designated Safeguarding Officers regarding which agency to contact.

In the absence of being able to liaise with any of the Designated Safeguarding Officers, staff, third party providers or volunteers may seek advice from one of the contact numbers below (see section 'Expert Advice').

## CHILDREN & FAMILIES DIVISION/ADULT SAFEGUARDING

To make a referral to Children or Adult Safeguarding during daytime hours, please contact (01624) 686179. If a referral needs to be made out of hours, please contact the IOM Police on (01624) 631212 and ask to be put through to the Out of Hours Social Worker.

When a safeguarding referral is made, the Children & Families Social Workers have a legal responsibility to investigate. This may involve talking to the child and family, and gathering information from other people who know the child.

## POLICE

Enquiries into a safeguarding incident may be carried out jointly between Children & Families Division and the Police. If action needs to be taken urgently and out of office hours, then the police will deal with the enquiry sensitively and effectively.

## ISLE OF MAN SAFEGUARDING BOARD

IOM Sport and Manx Sport and Recreation have close links with the Isle of Man Safeguarding Board and our Designated Safeguarding Officers have details of people that can be contacted for advice when required. Further information, including the IOM Policies and Procedures, can be found on their website here: <https://www.safeguardingboard.im/>

## PARENTS/CARERS

There is always a commitment to work in partnership with parents or carers where there are concerns about their children. Therefore, in most situations, it would be important to talk to parents or carers to help clarify any initial concerns. For example, if a child seems withdrawn, there may be a reasonable explanation. He/she may have experienced an upset in the family, such as parental separation, divorce or bereavement.

### 3.4.1 When it is NOT Appropriate to Share Concerns with Parents

There are circumstances in which the young person might be placed at even greater risk if concerns are shared (e.g. where a parent or carer may be responsible for the abuse or not able to respond to the situation appropriately). In these situations or where concerns still exist, any suspicion, allegation or incident of abuse must be reported to one of the Designated Safeguarding Officers as soon as possible and recorded via an IOMS Safeguarding Incident form. Advice and guidance will be sought from the local Children & Families Division with respect to consulting with parents by the Designated Safeguarding Officer.



## ACCURATE RECORD KEEPING

IOM Sport staff are required to complete accurate and thorough accounts of any safeguarding incident IMMEDIATELY after it has happened to ensure the highest quality of record keeping. An IOMS Safeguarding Incident form should be completed as soon as possible with one of the Designated Safeguarding Officers.

Information in the report should include:

- The nature of the allegation/ the reasons for your concern
- Full name and date of birth of the child
- Home address/Parent or Carer address
- The child's first language and any special needs
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries
- The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred
- Any witness(es) to the incident(s)
- Any times, dates or other relevant information
- A clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay
- Information regarding the alleged or suspected abuser

Reporting the matter to the Police or Children & Families Division by the Designated Safeguarding Officer should not be delayed by attempts to obtain more information and should be the same working day where possible.

Referrals made by telephone to the Children & Families Division should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours by the Designated Safeguarding Officer, including accurate records of all actions.

A copy of the incident may also be sent to the National Governing Body of Sport where deemed appropriate by the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

All information related to Safeguarding incidents will be treated sensitively and held securely on our database in a specific file with limited access. Information will be retained for no longer than 2 years unless there is involvement required with any external agencies.

## EXPERT ADVICE

If you are not sure what to do in an incident of a safeguarding nature, there are several support networks you can contact in the absence of support from the Designated Safeguarding Officers:

**Department of Education, Sport and Culture (DESC) Safeguarding Officer (01624) 686053**

**Manx Care Children & Families Division (01624) 686179**

**IOM Police (request to speak to Out of Hours Social Worker) (01624) 631212**

**NSPCC 24 hour helpline 0808 800 5000**