



# CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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## 1) INTRODUCTION

Disability Sports Coach (DSC) acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice within the UK Sport and Leisure sector.

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, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, socio-economic background, all children:

- have a positive and enjoyable experience of sport at Disability Sports Coach sessions in a safe and child centred environment
- are protected from abuse whilst participating in the activities provided by Disability Sports Coach.

Disability Sports Coach 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 Disability Sports Coach 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 Disability Sports Coach. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.

## **Monitoring**

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

- changes in legislation and/or government guidance
- as required by the Local Safeguarding Children Board, UK Sport and/or Home Country Sports Councils
- as a result of any other significant change or event.

All Disability Sports Coach employees and sub-contractors must read this policy and sign to confirm they have read and understood the document.

DSC staff have an important role to play in the recognition and referral stage of safeguarding and protecting children and young people.

A large number of our clients are children and it is, therefore, necessary to ensure that DSC has guidelines in place to ensure their welfare. DSC staff need to know the procedures should they follow in the event of suspected child or abuse taking place.

DSC employees are in a good position to watch out for and report any abuse or suspected abuse. The children who attend sport sessions on a regular basis may form friendships with DSC staff. It is possible that children and will confide in staff, particularly because of our regular visits. We are also able to perceive sudden changes in the participants' behavioural or physical well being over time.

The principle of the child protection laws (Children Act 1989) is that the welfare of the child is paramount. Under the law we are obligated to put children's interests first and the appropriate Social Services Department must be informed if abuse is suspected. Furthermore, guidance from "Working Together" (2015) underpins the charity's duty to recognise and report child safeguarding concerns.

It is not a DSC's employee's role to investigate any abuse, just to report it first to DSC's lead Safeguarding Officer. The matter will then be considered and appropriate action taken.

Only Social Services departments, the NSPCC and the Police have the statutory power to investigate when a child is considered to be at risk.

Our duty of care is to report such suspicions or information.

All staff should be aware of their legal position when it comes to child protection, including the Children Act 1989 and Occupiers Liability Act 1954 and 1984.

## **Working with Disabled Children and Young People**

Revised October 2025

DSC's safeguarding responsibilities are further heightened because all its participants are disabled and there is considerable evidence to suggest that disabled people are more at risk, in safeguarding terms, than their able-bodied peers. They are also less likely to receive the protection and support they need when they have been abused.

The NSPCC "*We have the right to be safe*": Protecting Children from Abuse report (Miller D, Brown J, October 2014) identified the following factors that increase risk and lessen protection for disabled children and young people:

- attitudes and assumptions – e.g. a reluctance to believe disabled children are abused; minimising the impact of abuse; and attributing indicators of abuse to the child's impairment
- barriers to the disabled child and their family accessing support services
- issues related to a child's specific impairment – e.g. dependency on a number of carers for personal or intimate care; impaired capacity to resist/avoid abuse, difficulties in communicating; and an inability to understand what is happening or to seek help
- limited opportunities for disabled children to seek help from someone else
- a lack of professional skills, expertise and confidence in identifying child protection concerns and the lack of an effective child protection response.

### **Definitions**

Any child with a disability is by definition a 'child in need' under section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA) and the Equality Act 2010 define a disabled person as someone who has:

*"A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities".*

For the purposes of this document, a disabled child or young person will refer to anyone accessing DSC's activities who is up to the age of 18.

## **2) Recognising Abuse**

This policy will be used whenever a DSC employee/ sub-contractor has concern about the welfare of a child or young person. The action will depend on the nature of the concern.

A child may make a disclosure of information to a DSC employee concerning their physical or emotional welfare, or make a comment about a bruise or other injury. It may be straightforward or it may be indirect but it is important to understand that children almost never lie about abuse.

All disclosures must be taken seriously, the member of staff must make it clear to the child that the information cannot be kept a secret and that if something harmful is being done, it can be stopped. It is important to acknowledge that this is likely to be very difficult for the child to acknowledge and confide such matters.

Always be ready to listen.

A member of staff may receive information concerning a child's welfare from another person or another child. Again, such information should be taken seriously and reported first to DSC's lead Safeguarding Officer, who will decide what action, if any, to be taken.

In the event of the lead Safeguarding Officer being unavailable, all matters should be reported to DSC's Chief Executive.

Recognising abuse can often be difficult and employees may be reluctant to report suspicion, for fear of reprisal. The following key points need to be adhered to:

- Everybody has a responsibility to report suspected or alleged abuse.
- Individuals should take note, not only of major incidents, but also of signals, which make them feel somewhat suspicious or concerning.
- Report also if there is a worrying change in a child's behaviour. Your intuition as well as observation will be taken seriously.
- Discuss any worries, however unspecific, with DSC's lead Safeguarding Officer. Please do not keep any worries to yourself.
- All such worries will be recorded.
- Great caution should be exercised in the presence of children and young people. The presence of symptoms does not mean it is inevitable that a child is being abused.

After reporting a suspicion, the lead Safeguarding Officer and you may be asked to attend a case conference with Social Services. Schools may also have their own procedures that they abide by and that also may involve you.

Categories of abuse

Abuse can include:

- Physical abuse
- Neglect
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse

### **(1) Physical assault:**

Definition, "The actual or likely physical injury to a person, or a failure to prevent physical injury or suffering to a person."

#### Physical sign's symptoms characteristic of physical abuse:

The following may be present (the list is indicative only and by no means comprehensive):

- High suspicion  
Human bite marks  
Bilateral black eyes  
Fingertip bruising
- Medium suspicion  
Burns or scalds  
Bruising in sites not easily injured  
Unusual cuts or marks  
Frequent accidents  
Head injuries
- Low suspicion  
Any injury (particularly repeated accidents)  
Strange or unusual behaviour e.g. aggressiveness

### **(2) Neglect:**

Definition, "Persistent or severe neglect of a person."

#### Alerting signs or symptoms:

The physical indicators of neglect can include:

- Abnormalities of skin and hair
- Poor hygiene
- Hunger
- Non-school attendance
- Missed appointments

The behavioural indicators of severe neglect are:

- Severe withdrawal state
- Food scavenging (in bins), stealing etc

### **(3) Sexual abuse:**

Definition, "Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways"

#### Alerting signs or symptoms:

- Hints at having sexual activity or having uncomfortable secrets
- They may behave in a sexual manner or speak with sexual words. Sexual promiscuity
- Severe eating disorders in older children
- Suicide attempts, self mutilating behaviour
- Fire raising
- Running away

### **(4) Emotional abuse:**

Definition, "The serious adverse effect on the emotional and behavioural development of a person, caused by persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection".

#### Alerting signs or symptoms:

- Severe withdrawal state
- Severe aggressive state
- Bullying
- Scapegoating
- Name calling

## **3) Reporting Abuse**

Levels of concern:

- (1) Concern but no obvious injury or direct allegation
- (2) Suspicious injuries and behaviour.
- (3) Disclosed information.

**In all incidences contact DSC's lead Safeguarding Officer first.**

**If there is Disclosed Information the Police will be contacted immediately by the lead Safeguarding Officer.**

Remember, we must **NOT** try to investigate the matter ourselves where there is a strong suspicion of physical or sexual abuse. Leave this to the Police and or Social Services.

Appendix 1 shows the standard from that is required to make a referral to Social Services.

#### **4) ALLEGATIONS ABOUT A MEMBER OF STAFF**

All complaints of child abuse against DSC employees will be handled swiftly and sensitively.

If an allegation concerning physical or sexual abuse is made about a DSC staff, the lead Safeguarding Officer will seek advice from the Social Services Office or Police Child Protection Unit, informing them of the incident and to discuss the necessary action to be taken.

If there is a concern about DSC's lead Safeguarding Officer, the issue must be reported to the charity's Chief Executive.

The DSC staff member will be informed. This must be done without questioning the employee about the complaint and making it clear that they have the right to be accompanied by representation, or friend at all stages.

#### **5) FURTHER INFORMATION**

ChildLine UK                      0800 11111

NSPCC                              0800 800500

The NSPCC project "Child Protection in Sport Unit" (CPSU) has a wealth of relevant resources.

[www.thecpsu.org.uk](http://www.thecpsu.org.uk)

### **Children Act (2015)**

[www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31)

### **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015)**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

### **Miller, D. and Brown, J. (2014) 'We have the right to be safe': protecting disabled children from abuse. [London]: NSPCC**

[www.nspcc.org.uk/services-and-resources/research-and-resources/2014/right-to-be-safe](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/services-and-resources/research-and-resources/2014/right-to-be-safe)

### **DSC Contact Details**

#### **Chief Executive – Peter Ackred**

Email: [peter@disabilitysportscoach.co.uk](mailto:peter@disabilitysportscoach.co.uk)

Telephone: 0207 9284267

#### **Lead Safeguarding Officer – Dora Crook Email:**

[Safeguarding@disabilitysportscoach.co.uk](mailto:Safeguarding@disabilitysportscoach.co.uk)

Telephone: 0207 9284267

### **Related Documents**

Other related DSC policies include:

- Photography Policy
- Public Interest Disclosure (“Whistleblowing”)
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure

Details available on request.

# **APPENDICES**

# 1. Accident/Incident Reporting Form

In the event of an accident, the following procedure should be followed by the club or organisation:

- Fill in 2 copies of the Accident/Incident reporting form for **ALL** accidents/incidents.
- Make contact with parents/guardians.
- One copy of form to incident book/folder.
- Forward 1 copy to designated person for record keeping/action required.
- Contact emergency services/GP if required.
- Record in detail all facts surrounding the accident, incident, witnesses etc.
- Any further action.
- Sign off on any action required from senior management officer.

<b>Name of organisation:</b>	
<b>Coach in attendance:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	
<b>Day time/ evening Tel No:</b>	
<b>Email address:</b>	

<b>Individual's personal information:</b>	
<b>Name of child/young person:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	
<b>Date of birth:</b>	
<b>Gender:</b>	Male / Female

<b>Accident/Incident information:</b>			
<i>(To be recorded by organisation/club and shared with relevant staff and parents/carers)</i>			
<b>Date:</b>		<b>Time:</b>	

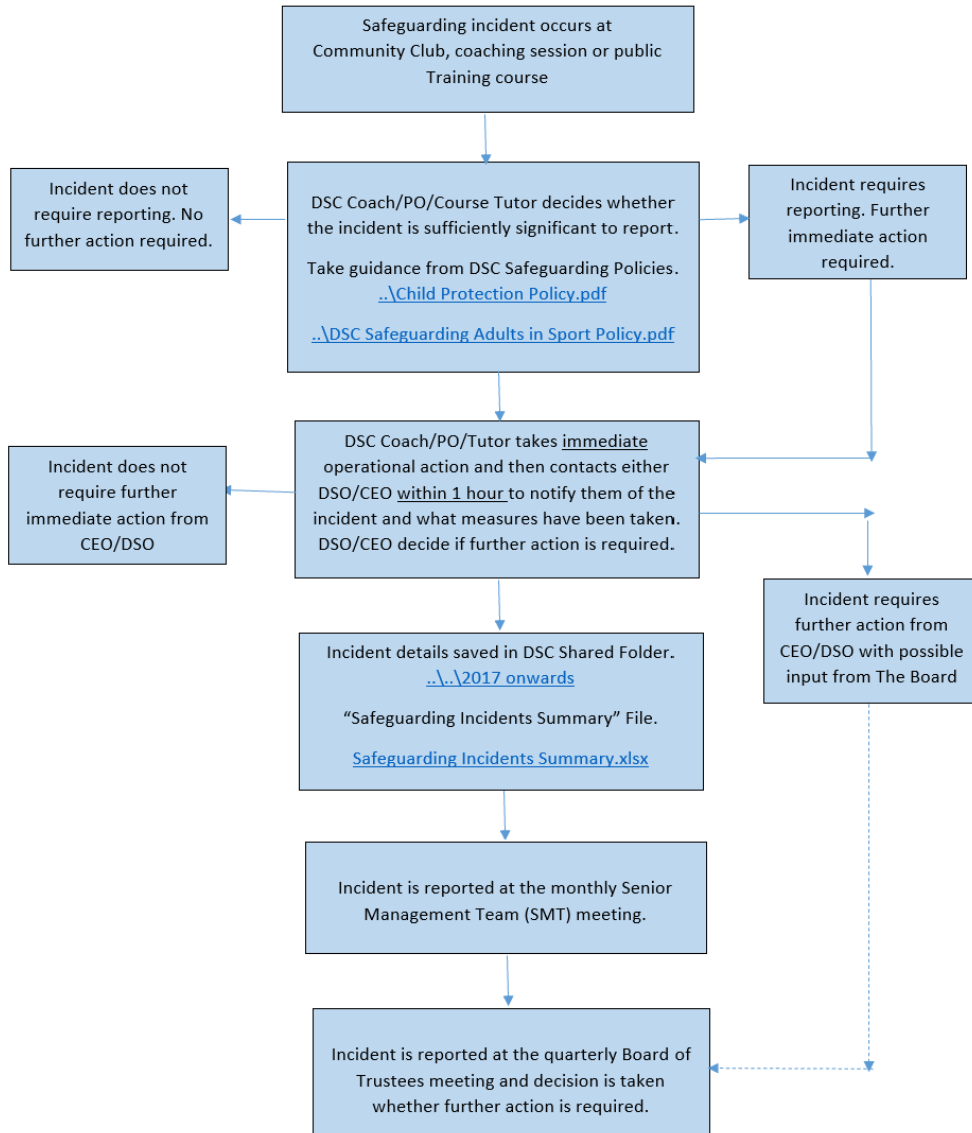
<b>Date reported:</b>		<b>Time reported:</b>	
<b>Reported by who:</b>			
<b>Location:</b>			
<b>Details:</b>			
<b>Nature and how accident/incident happened:</b>			
<b>Did anyone witness the accident/incident:</b>	Yes / No <i>(If Yes, state witness name/s and details below)</i>		
<b>Name of witnesses:</b>			
<b>First aid involved:</b> <i>(please provide details)</i>			
<b>Parents/carers notified:</b>	Yes / No <i>(If Yes, by whom and when below)</i>		
<b>Parents/carers notified by whom and when:</b>			
<b>Form completed by:</b>			
<b>Recommended action to be taken:</b>			
<b>Refer to designated Person(s):</b>	Yes / No <i>(If Yes, signature and name below)</i>		
<b>Signature:</b>			
<b>Print name:</b>			

<b>Has the young person returned to the organisation:</b>	Yes / No
<b>Signature of management representative:</b>	
<b>Print name:</b>	
<b>Role within organisation:</b>	

## 2. Procedure Flowcharts

### Outline Safeguarding Reporting Procedure Concerns About children and young people arising out of sport. (school or community)

#### Safeguarding Incident Reporting Process

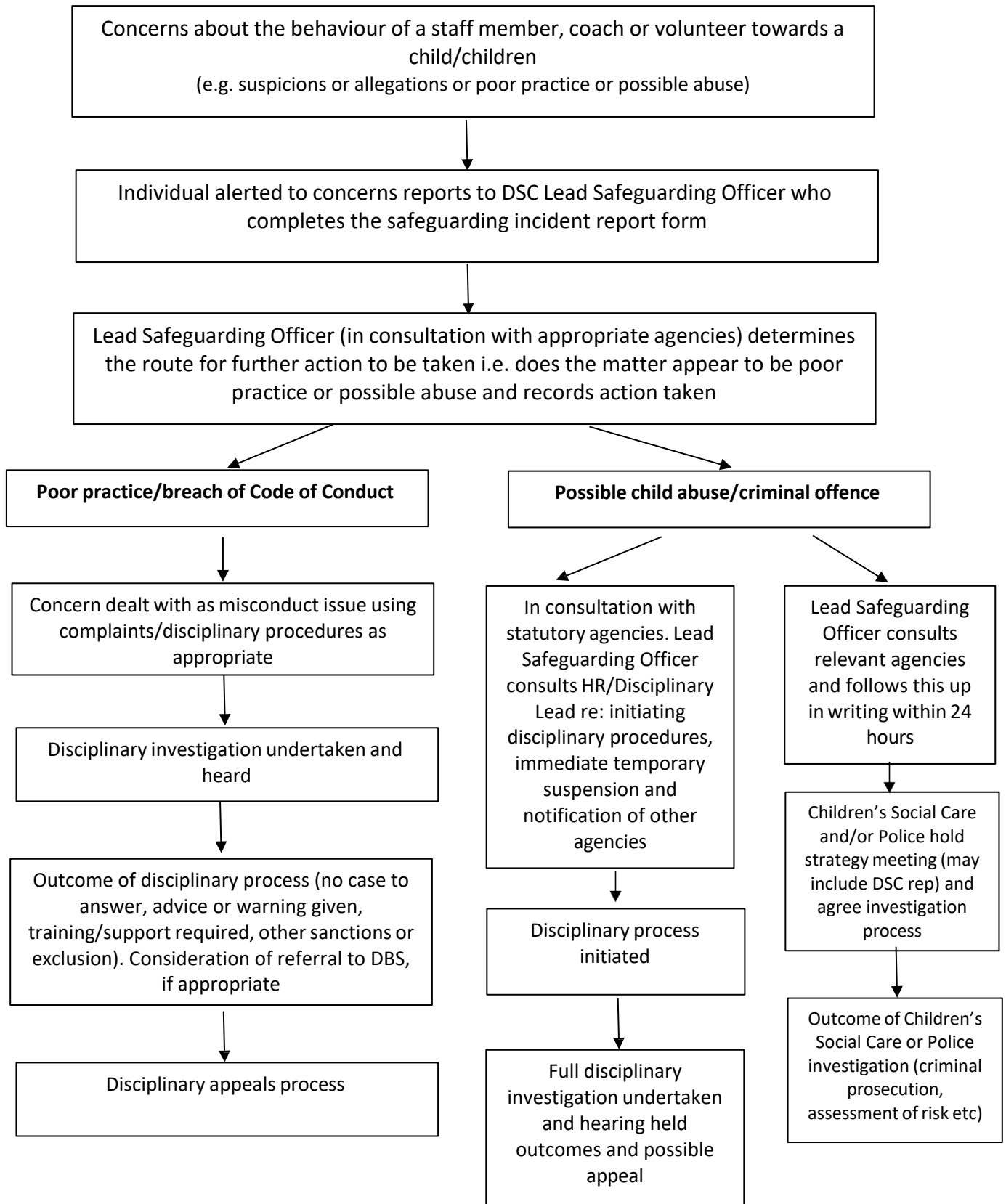


PO – Project Officer  
CEO – Chief Executive  
DSO – Designated Safeguarding Officer

## Outline Safeguarding Reporting Procedure Concerns

### About the behaviour of DSC's staff member, coach or volunteer

(allegation about a coach or officer's behaviour towards a child)



### **What is a serious incident?**

A serious incident is an adverse event, whether actual or alleged, which results in or risks significant:

- harm to your charity's beneficiaries, staff, volunteers or others who come into contact with your charity through its work
- loss of your charity's money or assets
- damage to your charity's property
- harm to your charity's work or reputation

## **Recruitment and DBS Policy**

### **What this policy covers**

This policy sets out the Charity's obligations on handling recruitment into job roles that involve working with vulnerable people and on monitoring and reporting information about you received during the course of your employment in those roles.

It also sets out your responsibilities for reporting abuse to any clients and the procedure for doing so.

### **Your entitlements and responsibilities**

#### **Recruitment**

The Charity will make it clear when advertising jobs whether the work will involve "regulated activity" as defined by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

Before an applicant can be employed in a regulated activity, the Charity will require you to provide a satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure with a barred list check from the Disclosure and Barring Service to confirm your suitability to carry out regulated activity.

#### **Work that becomes a regulated activity**

If your work either becomes a regulated activity or where you are asked to perform work that is a regulated activity, the Charity will require you to provide a satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure with a Barred List check from the Disclosure and Barring Service to confirm your suitability to carry out regulated activity.

If you refuse to undertake this check, or if you appear on the Barred List, the Charity will investigate whether you can continue to be employed in activities that are not regulated activities, but the Charity reserves the right to dismiss you.

#### **If you are added to a barred list during the course of your employment**

If you are added to a barred list during your current employment, the Charity will be legally obliged not to allow you to continue to engage in regulated activity. This may mean that the Charity cannot continue to employ you.

If the Charity receives notification that you have been barred, the Charity will investigate whether you can continue to be employed in activities that are not regulated activities, but in these circumstances the Charity reserves the right to dismiss you without notice.

### The Charity's duty to refer information

By law, the Charity has a duty to refer certain information to the Disclosure and Barring Service. This includes:

- if the Charity has dismissed an individual because he or she has harmed, or may harm, a vulnerable adult or child
- if an individual has resigned from employment with the Charity in circumstances where there is a suspicion that he or she has harmed, or may harm, a vulnerable adult or child (this will apply where an allegation has been made and the employee resigns before the Charity can take disciplinary action)
- if the Charity has suspended an individual and has reason to think the employee has engaged in "relevant conduct" or has harmed, or may harm, a vulnerable adult or child, or has received a caution or a conviction for, a relevant offence

## **Online Activity Safeguarding Policy**

The creation of Disability Sports Coach's Home Activity Programme has required us to develop an online Safeguarding policy, designed to mitigate the risk of any safeguarding incidents occurring.

1. All participants are requested to register to the programme. This allows us to collect important contact details as well as managing where session links are sent to.
2. Registrations must be completed by parents/carers/guardians for any participants under 18 and for at-risk adults.
3. DSC are responsible for the creation, management and distribution of the online link.
4. Participants are required to wear appropriate clothing depending on the session they are attending.
5. At the beginning of each session, a staff member makes a general announcement to ensure that all participants:
  - Are prepared for the session and are exercising in an area which is safe.
  - Should participate at a level at which they feel comfortable.
  - Understand that they are participating at their own risk.
  - Must be respectful of all other participants and use any chat facility appropriately.
  - Have a parent/carer on hand in case they require support.
6. A member of staff must always be online for all sessions to support the Coach/Instructor and to carry out duties such as keeping the register, admitting participants, encouraging participants etc. This ensures that freelance staff can only engage with participants in the presence of DSC staff.

7. The DSC staff member reserves the right to refuse admission to anyone who has not registered appropriately.
8. The DSC staff member reserves the right to mute all participants at any time during the session.
9. The DSC staff member reserves the right to remove any participant who is persistently disruptive or displays anti-social behaviour. This also extends to family members or carers who are also expected to behave appropriately throughout each session.
10. The DSC staff member is responsible for ending each session.
11. If a potential safeguarding incident occurs, it is reported in line with the Charity's reporting procedures.
12. For security purposes, details for the online link will be updated on a regular basis.

**By signing this document means that you understand and are willing to uphold 'Disability Sports Coach' policy and procedures.**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_