

ENGLAND HOCKEY

REPORTING PROCEDURES

2026



Image from Leyland & Chorley Hockey Club

The Government's guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026', states that 'safeguarding is everyone's responsibility' and sets out how individuals and organisations should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

For the first time in statutory guidance sport has been identified as a specific environment with responsibility for safeguarding young people.

England Hockey has developed policies, procedures and systems to manage concerns or allegations of poor practice and abuse against young people. England Hockey will always work in accordance with procedures as set out in the guidance.

The responsibility of The Hockey Family is to read, implement, monitor and evaluate their safeguarding policies, procedures and systems, so that in the event of a concern being raised a smooth process can be followed.

This section is divided into two parts:

• Responding to concerns

- If a young person or adult has concerns, it is important that they are able to report them

to someone. It is therefore important that everyone knows how to respond to any concerns, and who will do this.

• Taking appropriate action

- Once a concern has been reported, it is important that appropriate action is taken. It will not be the club's responsibility to decide if action needs to be taken, unless a child is at immediate risk of harm. It is, however, the club's responsibility to report the concerns appropriately in accordance with England Hockey's policies, procedures and systems.

Responding to Concerns

Concerns may be raised in response to the following:

- Something a young person has said to you – a disclosure

- Signs or suspicions of abuse
- Allegations made against a member of staff or a volunteer
- Allegations made about a parent / legal guardian, carer or someone not working within the sport
- Bullying
- A breach of England Hockey's Spirit of Hockey (Code of Conduct)
- Observation of inappropriate behaviour
- Anything which makes them uncomfortable based on inappropriate behaviour of an adult or changes in behaviour of a young person
- Inappropriate behaviour of a young person towards another young person
- Behaviour being contrary to England Hockey's Safeguarding and Protecting Young People in Hockey Policy and Procedures.
- Receiving a call from a statutory agency i.e. Police, Children's Services
- Reading or hearing something of concern about a member of the Hockey Family in the media

This list is not exhaustive

It is important to note that even if an incident or allegation occurs outside the hockey environment, it should still be reported to England Hockey if the adult or young person concerned is involved in hockey. This is in accordance with standard practice in sport.

Always

- Stay calm
- Reassure the person reporting their concerns that they have done the right thing in telling you
- Keep an open mind
- Listen carefully to what is said and take the person reporting it seriously
- Find an appropriate early opportunity to

explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others – do not promise to keep secrets

- Ask open questions for clarification only, avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer (i.e. yes or no questions). To help you to do this, try to ask questions starting with tell me about, explain to me, describe.
- Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared
- Report the incident to your Welfare Officer or England Hockey Safeguarding Manager/ Team
- Record in writing what was said using the young person's own words as soon as possible, using the England Hockey Safeguarding Referral Form.

Never

- Panic
- Make promises you cannot keep, including promises to keep secrets
- Make a young person repeat the information unnecessarily
- Question the detail of what the young person has shared
- Delay in reporting to your Welfare Officer or England Hockey Safeguarding Manager.
- Make assumptions
- Approach the alleged abuser
- Take sole responsibility.

Important reminders:

- Your organisation's Welfare Officer should be your first point of contact
- Welfare Officers should not deal with issues in isolation, they should receive support in dealing with issues by other trusted people (will vary according to organisation)
- Minimise the number of people that you



share a concern with, only share information on a need to know basis.

- If in doubt – ask for advice from your organisation’s Welfare Officer or England Hockey Safeguarding Team.
- Deal with incidents and concerns quickly – problems escalate when they don’t get addressed

It is acknowledged that taking appropriate action is never easy and the discovery that a member of a club or colleague may be acting inappropriately, bullying or abusing a child will raise concerns and emotional feelings for the person receiving the concern, and among other colleagues.

These emotions may evolve around feelings of:

- Doubt: Is it true?
- Guilt: Should I have known?
- Did I miss something?
- Did I have any suspicions?
- Should I have said something?
- Fear: Will others or I be suspected?
- What actions should be taken?
- Confusion: What will happen?
- What will be the effect?
- Concerns: What can I do to support all those people who may need support?
- How will it affect further relationships or contact with children?
- Are there systems in place to expose future situations?

These are natural responses but remember that the safety and welfare of young people is paramount.

It is not the club’s responsibility to decide if a child is being abused or poor practice has occurred.

Any concerns or allegations will be managed confidentially by England Hockey, with the club’s cooperation and assistance.

It is your responsibility to report your concerns, not act on them.

Speak to your Welfare Officer or England Hockey Safeguarding Manager who will:

- Support you
- Listen to you
- Take all concerns seriously

- Act immediately within hockey’s policies, procedures and systems
- Advise you what actions you need to take (if required)

Scenarios

Dealing with concerns – when to involve England Hockey:

It is important to deal with issues swiftly and effectively, using the most appropriate people and level of support. If in doubt, take advice. It is always better to raise a concern and take advice, than do nothing at all.

The following examples highlight concerns and gives guidance on how to respond and the most appropriate level for the concern. Some concerns can be dealt with at club level with support from EH but others will need to be dealt with centrally by EH.

Scenario one - WhatsApp group conversation (banter)

Concern: there is a 14year old male playing alongside adults in the local league. The club are using WhatsApp as a method of communication. The boy’s parent has read through the conversation and is concerned about the content in the chat and suggests it’s inappropriate. The parent has raised this with the team captain and their response was ‘they need to ‘man up’ it’s only banter’.

Response / things to think about:

- This type of concern should be reported to the club / organisation Welfare Officer, who may seek advice from EH.
- Always take any concerns raised seriously.
- Make a record of what was reported as soon as possible and keep notes of any subsequent conversations / action.
- WhatsApp terms of use now state individuals must be 16yrs old to use WhatsApp, therefore clubs should not use this method of communication below this age.
- At this stage there is no detail about the what is inappropriate about the chat – don’t make assumptions.
- Don’t allow ‘banter’ to be used as an excuse. Banter becomes bullying when there is an imbalance of power, when its consistent or hurtful. Excessive and repetitive banter can quickly become bullying.

- How easy is it for the 14yr old to say they are not comfortable with this chat?
- Is the conversation still available on WhatsApp? WO could review – discuss content and its appropriateness with EH if necessary. Depending on nature of messages, will depend on action required. complete the safeguarding referral form and contact your Welfare Officer. In their absence, contact England Hockey’s Safeguarding Manager on 01628 897500 or email: safeguarding@englandhockey.co.uk
- Additional contact details can be found in the ‘Useful Contacts’ document.

Who do you report the concerns to?

- If the nature of the messages means that referral to EH is required (and the England Hockey Safeguarding Manager is not available) and a child is at immediate risk or in danger, you must avoid delay and seek advice from your local authority Children Social Care Department (previously Social Services) and the Police.
- Opportunity to review ‘dos & don’ts’ on WhatsApp – get all members to agree what it should and shouldn’t be used for – it makes it easier to challenge if these are agreed.
- Find appropriate way of involving 14yr old that makes them feel part of the team
- Involve the parent in messaging, so they have sight of all communication
- Consider appointing a mentor for the young player – someone they can relate to and share their concerns with.

Scenario two - sudden weight loss

Concern: Your welfare officer receives a call from the Head Coach who has concerns about a young player. The player has been a regular squad player for the last couple of seasons and the coach has noticed that they have lost a lot of weight recently. The weight loss appears to be affecting their ability to train, they are lethargic and are struggling to keep up. Other players have commented on them being a fussy eater.

Response / things to think about:

- Welfare Officer to manage this situation sensitively and take advice from EH Safeguarding Manager.
- Make a note of what was reported, including time, names, details

- Action must be taken – you cannot ignore and do nothing
- Don’t make assumptions
- Has anyone spoken to the player directly? How is the player? How do they feel? Are they concerned? Are they looking for help?
- Have the player or their parents disclosed any information to the coach or Welfare Officer in relation to this players health?
- How old is the player? This may have an impact on parental involvement.
- EH would always advocate parental involvement, unless there is good reason not to.
- If the player is happy for you to speak to parent, do so, if not, seek advice.

Scenario three – call from a statutory agency

Concern: Your club Chair receives a call from the local police force with information relating to one of your umpires who has been arrested for possession of inappropriate images of under 18’s. The club Chair calls the Welfare Officer and proposes to hold a committee meeting to discuss this.

Response / things to think about:

- Make a record of what was said, including names, numbers, dates, times etc. and as much detail as possible.
- Phone England Hockey Safeguarding Manager immediately, do not discuss this matter with the committee, any other club members or the umpire himself.
- England Hockey’s Safeguarding Case Management Panel is consulted on the incident and will lead the process for establishing facts, liaison with statutory agencies and will inform club of any actions agreed.
- England Hockey will advise the club on next steps and any relevant communication with the umpire and membership.

Taking Appropriate Action

England Hockey has clear procedures for reporting concerns. It is important that you follow the procedure detailed and fulfill YOUR role in the process.



It is not your responsibility to decide if a situation is poor practice, abuse or bullying, but it is your responsibility to report your concerns.

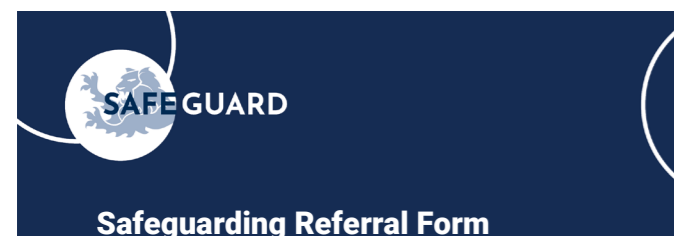
How do you report the concerns?

The following diagrams illustrate the reporting process depending on whether the concerns are from within or outside the hockey environment.

It is important that information regarding the concern is recorded properly and promptly. To assist with this process, England Hockey has developed a Safeguarding Referral Form which outlines the information that is required.

As soon as possible after concerns have been reported to you, should report to the Local Authority Children's Social Care Department (Social Services) or Police or the Local Authority Designated officer (LADO) if the person is in a position of trust, in the area that the child lives (see England Hockey Reporting Procedures).

As soon as possible, inform England Hockey's Safeguarding Manager and share the action taken to date.



Please fill in the above [form](#) and send directly to safeguarding@englandhockey.co.uk.

Club / Organisation / Individuals responsibility

If a club / organisation decides to remove someone from their club for child protection reasons, they MUST inform England Hockey immediately. This ensures that they simply do not move to a new club/ organisation

For other situations, where a child is not at immediate risk or danger:

Working in an affiliated club or organisation

- You must report your concerns, or any information received to the Welfare Officer
- The Welfare Officer may seek advice or refer the matter to England Hockey Safeguarding Manager.

Working in a school

- You must inform the designated teacher, who will follow their reporting procedures. Also advise England Hockey's Safeguarding Manager for their information.

If your concern is regarding the Welfare Officer, report directly to the England Hockey Safeguarding Manager.

Why is it important to report concerns to England Hockey?

Advice, guidance and support

It is EH's responsibility to support clubs and individuals in managing concerns and to advise and support accordingly.

In some cases, England Hockey will manage concerns directly via its Case Management Group (CMG).

England Hockey may have additional information that is relevant to a particular case.

Take advice early – many concerns can be dealt with promptly and proportionately when they are acted on quickly. This can also prevent issues escalating.

England Hockey's responsibility

EH recognises that dealing with a child protection allegation can be a stressful experience, especially if the person the concern is about is an established member; EH will support welfare officers and clubs to manage this process. In some circumstances EH will take the responsibility for managing the case, providing a more objective view on the situation and helping the club manage conflicts that can often arise within a club or organisation.

Case Management Group (CMG)

EH have a centralised case management process, this is led by a Case Management Group (CMG). The CMG is a small group of individuals (internal and external) with specialist expertise and skills.

A centralised reporting system provides EH with the ability to gather and collate relevant information, gain an overview and take appropriate action. EH may have received information from several different sources, information which in isolation may not be of concern, but collectively forms a wider perspective. It also allows the sport to manage cases where an individual may hold roles with various organisations

or may seek alternative clubs if one takes action against them.

EH's responsibility is to risk assess information received centrally. Every case or concern will be dealt with on an individual basis and will be assessed in relation to risk or harm to children or young people. England Hockey have responsibility across the whole sport, so information assessed can be considered. There are a number of different outcomes of the risk assessment process, these may include putting; a plan together to manage that risk, disciplinary action and/or suspension.

Where necessary EH will lead the liaison and communication with relevant statutory agencies. EH will inform organisations and/or individuals on a 'need to know' basis – information sharing is sensitive and EH will advise and, where appropriate, inform relevant parties.

CMG will support clubs in dealing with child protection matters – including membership and media enquiries.

CMG will provide individuals that are subject to an investigation with information on the process and procedures, likely timescales and details on next steps. Where appropriate and possible CMG will provide support to an individual that is under investigation, this is likely to be via signposting to appropriate organisations and may vary according to the individual circumstances of a case.

What happens next?

Statutory Agencies will follow procedures under The Children Acts 1989 & 2004, and Government Guidance "Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026".

Where a concern is reported to England Hockey and further action is required, England Hockey's Safeguarding Manager and England Hockey's Case Management Group will follow the Safeguarding and Protecting Young People Complaints and Disciplinary Regulations. These are available on request from England Hockey and on the [England Hockey Website](#)

At all times England Hockey will support and communicate with the Club Welfare Officer where appropriate in the management of the situation.

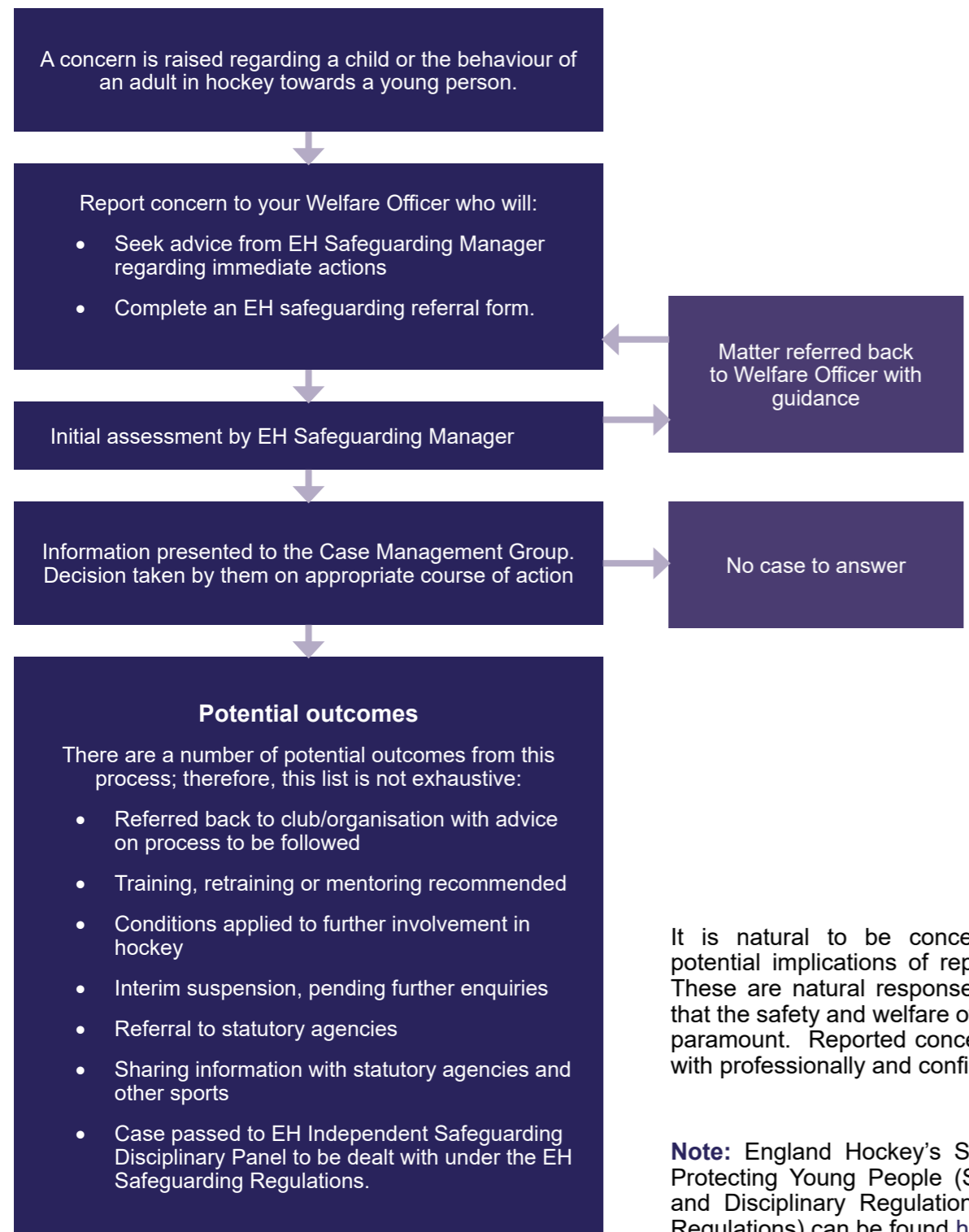
In some circumstances it may be most appropriate for the matter to be handled at local level e.g. on matters relating to minor poor practice or bullying. If this is appropriate suitable guidance will be given by the England Hockey Safeguarding Manager.



REPORTING CONCERNS OF POSSIBLE ABUSE WITHIN A HOCKEY ENVIRONMENT IN RELATION TO A YOUNG PERSON

What to do if you are concerned about the behaviour of any member of the Hockey Family or believe a child to be at risk of harm or abuse.

If there is an immediate risk or the young person requires immediate medical attention, contact the emergency services in the first instance.



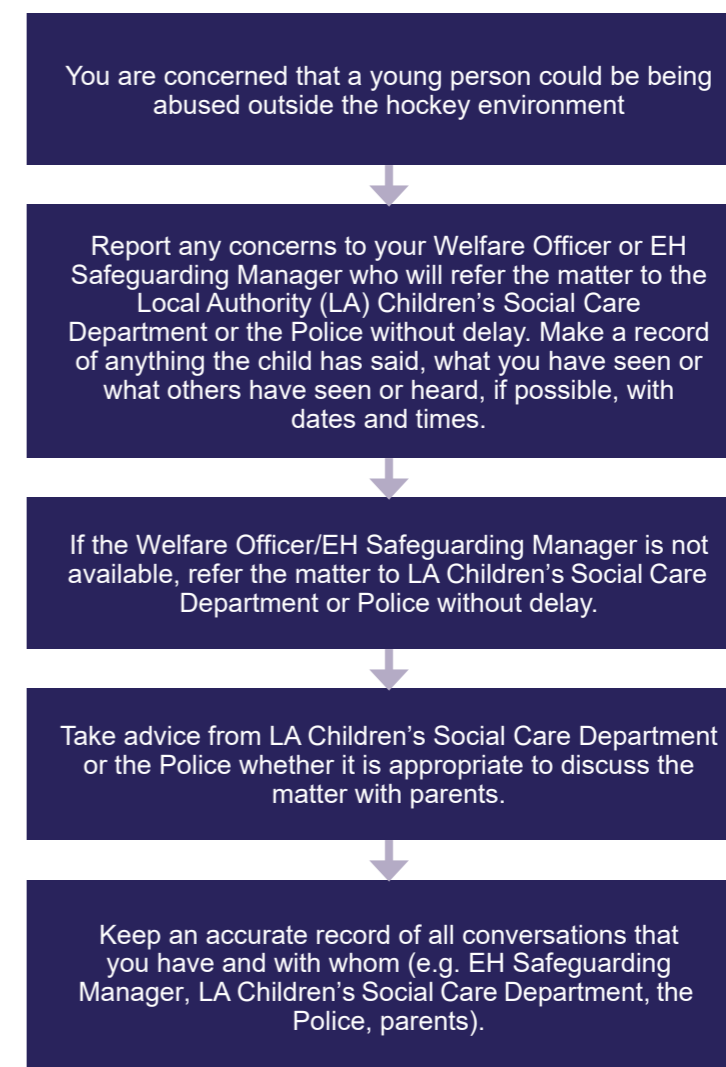
It is natural to be concerned about the potential implications of reporting concerns. These are natural responses but remember that the safety and welfare of young people is paramount. Reported concerns will be dealt with professionally and confidentially.

Note: England Hockey's Safeguarding and Protecting Young People (SYP) Complaints and Disciplinary Regulations (Safeguarding Regulations) can be found [here](#).

REPORTING CONCERNS OF POSSIBLE ABUSE OUTSIDE THE HOCKEY ENVIRONMENT IN RELATION TO A YOUNG PERSON

What to do if you are concerned that a young person is being abused or is at risk of harm outside the hockey environment (but that concern is identified through that young person's involvement in hockey).

If there is an immediate risk or the young person requires immediate medical attention, contact the emergency services in the first instance.



England Hockey Contact for Reporting Concerns:

Safeguarding Manager: Tel: 07391 412734

Email: safeguarding@englandhockey.co.uk

NSPCC Helpline (free 24-hour helpline): 0808 800 5000

Also see '[Useful Contacts](#)' document.



GOOD PRACTICE IN SHARING INFORMATION

Some information that may need to be shared regarding a concern for the well-being of a young person may be personal and/or sensitive. The following principles are good practice in how this information is shared:

Golden Rules of Sharing Sensitive Information

1. **The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018** and human rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing, but provide a framework to ensure personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.
2. **Be open and honest with the individual** (and / or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
3. **Seek advice** from other practitioners or your information Governance lead, if you are any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.
4. **Where possible, share information with consent**, and where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to having their information shared. Under the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 you may share information without consent if, in your judgment, there is a lawful basis to do so, such as where safety may be at risk. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case. When you are sharing or requesting personal information from someone, be clear on the basis upon which you are doing so. Where you do not have consent, be mindful that an individual might not expect information to be shared. **England Hockey can provide guidance if necessary.**
5. **Consider safety and well-being:** base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.
6. **Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure:** ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, share only with those individuals

who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely.

7. **Keep a record** of your decision and the reasons for it - whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose. (Inform the England Hockey Safeguarding Manager of your actions.)

Confidentiality:

- Every effort must be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained when an allegation has been made and is being investigated.
- Only tell individuals who need to know and can help to manage the concern.

Confidentiality is essential and if maintained will ensure:

- The safety of the young person involved
- That action is taken to protect the young person
- That individuals involved in any complaint are protected from gossip and assumptions
- That individuals who have a complaint against them receive fair treatment, without prejudice or pre-judgment
- That all policies, procedures and systems can work to manage any situation quickly, professionally and effectively.

Impact if confidentiality is breached:

If confidentiality is breached the following can happen:

- The young person is put in danger either by
 - Further inappropriate action of any adult/ young person involved or
 - Other individuals who hear about any concern through rumours
 - Through lack of action
- Any investigation by either England Hockey or the statutory agencies may be invalidated by misinformation or rumours
- Individuals with a complaint against them may be victims of inappropriate behaviour from club members

- The policies, procedures and systems in place will not support or uphold any complaint or concern.

Whistle blowing policy:

If there is a concern with regard to the behaviour of any individual (adult and/or young person) towards a young person, it is important that you share your concerns with the England Hockey Safeguarding Manager.

All information received and discussed will be treated in confidence and only shared with those individuals within England Hockey who will be able to manage and resolve the situation. On occasion it may be necessary to seek advice or inform the statutory agencies e.g. Children's Social Care or the Police or the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) if the person is in a position of trust. All concerns will be taken seriously and managed according to the England Hockey Safeguarding Young People Policies and Procedures.

General principles

A member of the Hockey Family is often the first to realise that a young person's safety and welfare are under threat. However, they may not express their concerns because they feel that speaking up would be too difficult to handle. It may also be that they fear harassment or victimisation. In these circumstances it may be easier for them to ignore the concern rather than report what may just be a suspicion of poor practice.

England Hockey is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, honesty and accountability. In line with that commitment, individuals are encouraged, if they have serious concerns about any aspect of a young person's safety and welfare, to come forward and voice those concerns.

This policy makes it clear that individuals **can** raise a matter of concern without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage. The policy is intended to encourage and enable individuals to raise serious concerns **within** England Hockey rather than overlooking a problem or blowing the whistle outside.

It is in the interest of all concerned that disclosure of potential abuse or irregularities are dealt with properly, quickly and discreetly. This includes the interests of England Hockey, its employees, all persons registered as members of England Hockey and any persons who are the subject of any complaint, as well as the person making the complaint.

Safeguards

England Hockey is committed to good practice and high standards and wants to be supportive of everyone within the Hockey Family.

England Hockey recognises that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make, not least because of the fear of reprisal from those responsible for the allegation. If an individual believes what they are saying to be true, they should have nothing to fear, because in reporting their concern they will be doing their duty to the young person concerned.

England Hockey will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation (including informal pressures) and will take appropriate action to protect individuals when they raise a concern in good faith.

Any investigation into allegations of poor practice will not influence or be influenced by any disciplinary procedures that already affect individuals unless there may be a pattern of poor practice/abuse which requires the cases to be linked /dealt with together.

Confidentiality:

England Hockey will do its best to protect the identity of the whistleblower when they raise a concern and do not want their name to be disclosed. It must be appreciated that the investigation process may reveal the source of the information and a statement by the whistleblower may be required as part of the evidence. They will be given prior notice of this and a chance to discuss the consequences.

Anonymous allegations

This policy encourages the whistleblower to put their name to their allegation. Concerns expressed anonymously are much less powerful, but they will be considered (at the discretion of the England Hockey Case Management Group).

In exercising the discretion, the factors to be taken into account would include:

- The seriousness of the issues raised;
- The credibility of the concern; and
- The likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources or factual records.

Unfounded allegations:

If an individual makes an allegation in good faith, but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against them. If, however, it is established that they have made malicious or frivolous



allegations, or for personal gain, disciplinary action may be taken against them. In such cases, England Hockey's disciplinary procedure will apply.

Use of the whistle blowing policy:

The whistle blowing policy should only be followed if the person raising the concern feels unable to follow the standard reporting procedures as set out in England Hockey's Safeguarding and Protecting Young People in Hockey Policy and Procedures.

How to raise a concern

Individuals should raise the concern in the first instance with the England Hockey Safeguarding Manager 07391 412734 or by post to England Hockey, England Hockey, Bisham Abbey National Sports Centre, Marlow, Buckinghamshire, SL7 1RR (you should mark the envelope 'private & confidential'); or email: safeguarding@englandhockey.co.uk

If you believe that you have not received a satisfactory response to your concern, you should contact the EH Chief Executive Officer.

Concerns may be made verbally or in writing to the England Hockey Safeguarding Manager (as above). The individual should set out the background and history of the concern, giving names, dates and places where possible and the reason why they are particularly concerned about the situation. The earlier the individual expresses concern, the easier it is for someone to take action.

Although the whistleblower is not expected to prove the truth of an allegation, they will need to demonstrate to the England Hockey Safeguarding Manager that there are sufficient grounds for their concern.

If your concern is about the England Hockey Safeguarding Manager, you should refer the matter to England Hockey's Chief Executive Officer.

If you do not want, or feel unable, to report the matter to England Hockey, a number of external agencies are also available for reporting purposes. See 'Useful Contacts' document.

How will England Hockey respond?

The action taken by England Hockey will depend on the nature of the concern. In all cases the matter will be referred to the England Hockey Case Management Group.

In order to protect individuals it is likely that the England Hockey Safeguarding Manager

will conduct initial enquiries so that the Case Management Group can decide whether an investigation is appropriate and, if so, what form it should take.

The amount of contact between the people considering the issues and the whistleblower will depend on the nature of the matters raised, the potential difficulties involved and the clarity of the information provided. If necessary, further information will be sought from the whistleblower as part of the investigation process.

When any meeting is arranged, the whistleblower has the right, if they so wish, to be accompanied by a friend or a person of their choice who is not involved in the matter to which the concern relates.

England Hockey will take steps to minimise any difficulties which individuals may experience as a result of raising a concern. For instance, if the whistleblower is required to give evidence in criminal or disciplinary proceedings, England Hockey will advise them about the procedure.

England Hockey accepts that the whistleblower needs to be assured that the matter has been properly addressed. Subject to legal constraints, they will receive information about the outcome of any investigation, and the action that is to be taken against those whose actions caused them concern. Also, if appropriate, what policy changes are to be made to minimise the possibility of a similar concern being raised in the future.

How can the matter be taken further?

This policy is intended to provide individuals with a way in which they can raise concerns about the safety and welfare of any young person involved in any hockey activity under the jurisdiction of England Hockey. England Hockey hopes individuals will be satisfied that any child protection matter they raise has been considered properly. If they are not satisfied, and if they feel it is right to take the matter outside England Hockey, they should contact:

- Their Local Safeguarding Organisations (previously known as Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB))
- Their Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) if the person is in a position of trust
- Their local Children's Social Care Dept
- Their local police

If they do take the matter outside England Hockey, they will need to ensure that they do not disclose prohibited confidential information. They must check this before they make contact.

