Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy

1. Policy Statement
2. Scope and Application
3. Safeguarding Principles
4. Safeguarding Responsibilities & Assurance
5. Legal and Governance Framework
6. Information Sharing and Reporting

Appendix:
Definitions
Links to Support

1 Policy Statement

1.1 This policy outlines England Hockey's (EH) approach to creating and maintaining fun and safe environments where young people can thrive. England Hockey seeks to lead the sport by collaborating with and empowering our community, and together we aim to deliver safer activity and welcoming environments for everyone.

1.2 All Children and Young People have the right to be safe, supported, and protected from harm, abuse and exploitation. All Children and Young People have the right to participate in hockey in an environment that is safe, welcoming and enjoyable.

1.3 EH recognises that safeguarding is a shared responsibility across hockey, and that Children and Young People must receive help and protection when they need it. The welfare of Children and Young People should always be the sport's first priority.

1.4 EH acknowledges that some Children and Young People, including deaf and disabled children and those from Black, Asian and minoritised ethnic communities, may experience additional barriers to recognising abuse, disclosing concerns or accessing appropriate support. EH accepts its responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to identify and address those barriers and ensure that all Children and Young People are effectively safeguarded.

1.5 EH acknowledges its legal and moral responsibility, and that of its member clubs and organisations, to safeguard all Children and Young People involved in hockey. Whilst safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, within EH there is a team of individuals who have more specific responsibility in relation to safeguarding, namely our Board Champion, an Executive Director, our Head of Legal and Governance and our Safeguarding team who manage both reactive and proactive safeguarding.

1.6 This policy, supported by associated procedures, guidance and codes of conduct, sets out our commitment to preventing harm, responding to concerns, and ensuring that all participants are protected from poor practice, abuse and exploitation.

1.7 This policy operates in line with safeguarding legislation, national standards and guidance, and EH will work in partnership with statutory agencies and specialist organisations to ensure best practice is implemented, monitored and maintained.

1.8 This policy sits alongside the EH Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy to support a consistent and continuous approach to safeguarding and wellbeing as young people transition into adulthood.

2 Scope & Application

2.1 From the Board to staff, EH places the welfare of Children and Young People at the heart of its culture and values. As the National Governing Body for hockey in England, EH is responsible for promoting a safe, welcoming and enjoyable environment for all Children and Young People.

2.2 Nonetheless, safeguarding responsibilities are shared and proportionate, reflecting the role and activities of each organisation and individuals within the sport.

2.3 This policy applies to:

2.3.1 All EH Board and staff members;

2.3.2 All EH Members and Connected Participants of EH;

2.3.3 All individuals, clubs, associations and organisations delivering or participating in hockey under the jurisdiction of England Hockey, whether or not they are an EH Member, including players, coaches, umpires, officials, volunteers, parents, and spectators.

2.4 EH will take proportionate and appropriate action against any individual or organisation found to be in breach of this policy, be that through investigation, suspension or sanctions under the EH Safeguarding Disciplinary Regulations. Such behaviours may also attract sanctions under the separate EH Disciplinary Regulations.

2.5 EH welcomes concerns raised in good faith and will always treat them seriously. No action will be taken against anyone raising a genuine concern, even if it is later found to be unsubstantiated. Every concern is assessed by EH's Safeguarding Team on its own merits, regardless of the identity or history of the person raising it. Where, following assessment, a concern is found to have no safeguarding substance and forms part of a pattern of repeated, unevidenced allegations against the same individual, EH may address that pattern under the EH Safeguarding Disciplinary Regulations and/or the vexatious and persistent complainant provisions of the EH Complaints Policy.

2.6 This policy should be read alongside the following EH documents:

2.6.1 EH Safeguarding Disciplinary Regulations

2.6.2 EH Safeguarding Reporting Procedures

2.6.3 EH Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy

2.6.4 EH Spirit of Hockey (Code of Conduct)

2.6.5 EH Safe Recruitment Guidance

2.6.6 EH Good Practice Guidance

2.6.7 EH Recognising Poor Practice Guidance

2.6.8 EH Employee Handbook and Disciplinary Process (where applicable)

2.7 England Hockey's current Performance and Development Pathway structure does not select Children or Young People onto a UK Sport-funded Performance Programme. In the event that this position changes, any Child or Young Person selected onto such a programme would be treated as an "Athlete" for the purposes of the Sport Integrity Service Rules of Procedure, and the Sport Integrity referral and cooperation provisions set out in the EH Safeguarding Disciplinary Regulations would apply to them in addition to, and without replacing, the protections in this Policy.

3 Safeguarding Principles

3.1 EH and all those involved in hockey will uphold the following principles:

3.1.1 The welfare of Children and Young People is paramount.

3.1.2 All Children and Young People have the right to be safe, respected, included and heard.

3.1.3 Everyone has a duty to recognise and report safeguarding concerns. Failure to report concerns in accordance with this policy, or our reporting procedures, or to a Club Welfare Officer, may result in disciplinary action.

3.1.4 Adults in Positions of Trust must maintain clear, professional boundaries.

3.1.5 Adults in Positions of Trust must not engage in any sexual or romantic relationship with a child or young person under 18 years of age. This includes young people aged 16 and 17 and applies regardless of consent.

3.1.6 Low-level concerns, poor practice, and early indicators of potential harm must be recognised, recorded and addressed promptly to prevent escalation and to foster an effective safeguarding culture.

3.1.7 Safeguarding is essential to creating a safe and welcoming environment.

3.2 EH aligns with the principles of *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)* and the NSPCC Sport framework, including vigilance, respect, partnership and child voice. Young People are central to safeguarding decision-making, alongside effective partnership working, early help and timely action to protect children.

4 Safeguarding Responsibilities & Assurance

4.1 EH will:

4.1.1 Reinforce the message that safeguarding is not optional and that everyone has responsibility to ensure Children and Young People are safe in hockey.

4.1.2 Prioritise children's and young people's welfare and ensure their voices inform decision-making.

4.1.3 Provide expertise, support and resources to help the sport maintain the highest level of safeguarding practice in all areas of sport.

4.1.4 Ensure systems are in place to identify, record, review and respond to low-level safeguarding concerns, including monitoring for patterns of behaviour and escalating concerns where appropriate.

4.1.5 Embed safeguarding through clear policies, procedures, codes of conduct and assurance activity.

4.1.6 Commit to share information about safeguarding and good practice with children and their parents via leaflets, posters, group work, forums and one-to-one discussions.

4.1.7 Ensure all individuals in Positions of Trust complete the required safeguarding training and vetting, monitored through EH compliance processes.

4.1.8 Respond promptly and proportionately to all concerns, recording and managing cases in line with EH procedures and statutory guidance.

4.1.9 Refer matters to the Police, Children's Social Care or the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) when appropriate.

4.1.10 Maintain safe systems, including secure information handling and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) compliance.

4.1.11 Ensure strategic safeguarding leadership, and work collaboratively with Sport England, UK Sport and the CPSU.

4.1.12 Ensure all staff receive appropriate periodical safeguarding training.

4.1.13 EH may, following a case-by-case assessment, publish or otherwise communicate the outcome of safeguarding-related disciplinary decisions where it considers this to be necessary and proportionate for safeguarding purposes. In reaching this decision, EH will balance the sensitivity of the matter with the need to protect participants, promote learning, and maintain confidence in safeguarding arrangements. All decisions will be consistent with UK GDPR Article 6 & 9 conditions and in line with the EH Safeguarding Disciplinary Regulations (Regulation 16).

4.1.14 Any publication will be lawful, proportionate, and compliant with data protection and confidentiality requirements. Decisions relating to publication form part of EH's safeguarding risk-management function and do not constitute an additional sanction.

4.2 Clubs and Associations will:

4.2.1 Adopt and promote the EH Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy.

4.2.2 Appoint at least one trained Welfare Officer who has completed the *Welfare Officer Workshop* (renewed every three years).

4.2.3 Use the EH Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) system and follow EH safe recruitment requirements. The level of DBS check requested must be determined by the legal eligibility of the specific role and the activities undertaken, rather than by the role title or Position of Trust designation alone.

4.2.4 Ensure that each role involving Children and Young People is assessed to determine the appropriate level of DBS check for which it is legally eligible:

4.2.4.1 Enhanced DBS check with Children's Barred List check – where the role involves Regulated Activity with children or otherwise meets the statutory criteria for access to the Children's Barred List.

4.2.2.2 Enhanced DBS check without Children's Barred List information – where the role meets the eligibility requirements for an Enhanced DBS check but does not qualify for access to the Children's Barred List.

4.2.2.3 Standard DBS check – only where the role meets the relevant statutory eligibility criteria for a Standard check.

4.2.2.4 Basic DBS check – where the role is not eligible for a Standard or Enhanced check and a criminal record check is considered appropriate and proportionate as part of EH's safe recruitment process.

4.2.2.5 DBS eligibility must be determined by the activities and responsibilities of the specific role. EH's Safeguarding Team can provide guidance on the appropriate level of check. EH requires relevant DBS checks to be renewed or revalidated every three years as an EH safeguarding and assurance requirement.

4.2.5 Maintain safe, positive, welcoming and inclusive environments.

4.2.6 Record, manage and escalate low-level safeguarding concerns in line with EH guidance and reporting procedures.

4.2.7 Report safeguarding concerns *immediately* via EH Reporting Procedures.

4.3 Non-Member Participants involved in England Hockey activity, events, programmes or competitions, or acting under the jurisdiction or authority of England Hockey will:

4.3.1 Comply with all EH safeguarding policies and procedures.

4.3.2 Promote a safe and welcoming environment.

4.3.3 Where working in a Position of Trust / Regulated Activity:

- Complete EH safeguarding training (renew every three years).

- Hold an Enhanced DBS check (renew every three years) in line with 4.2.4.

4.3.4 Report safeguarding concerns immediately via EH Reporting Procedures.

4.3.5 Ensure appropriate insurance and safeguarding provisions when delivering hockey tuition or competition independently. EH may request evidence where relevant.

4.3.6 Schools and colleges operate under the Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory framework (2026). EH safeguarding procedures will complement these where EH personnel or programmes are involved.

4.3.7 Failure to comply with safeguarding requirements or carry out actions or activities that place children at risk, may result in an inability to participate in England Hockey activity, events, programmes or competitions. Additionally, this may result in referral to relevant authorities or employers.

5 Legal and Governance Framework

5.1 Statutory guidance takes precedence over this policy. England Hockey will always operate within the requirements of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, Children's Social care and the Police. This policy has been written based on legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect Children in England.

5.2 The relevant legislation includes:

5.2.1 Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004
5.2.2 Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
5.2.3 Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
5.2.4 Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
5.2.5 Sexual Offences Act 2003
5.2.6 Modern Slavery Act 2015
5.2.7 Equality Act 2010
5.2.8 Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
5.2.9 Police Act 1997
5.2.10 Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and relevant (Exceptions) Orders 1975
5.2.11 Crime and Policing Act 2026, including provisions relating to child sexual abuse and Regulated Activity, as brought into force
5.2.12 Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
5.2.13 Information Sharing to Safeguard Children and Young People 2026
5.2.14 NSPCC Sport Unit Standards for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport.

6 Information Sharing and Reporting

6.1 All safeguarding concerns must be reported in accordance with EH's Safeguarding Reporting Procedures. Reports will be managed promptly, sensitively, and in compliance with statutory requirements.

6.1.1 Where a Child or Young Person is in immediate danger or requires urgent medical assistance, the emergency services must be contacted on 999. A safeguarding concern must also be reported to EH in accordance with the EH Safeguarding Reporting Procedures as soon as practicable.

6.2 The EH Safeguarding Team provides confidential advice, guidance and support to anyone raising or managing safeguarding concerns. Information will be shared where there is a lawful basis to do so and where sharing is necessary and proportionate to safeguard or promote the welfare of a Child or Young Person. Consent is not always required before safeguarding information is shared. Information sharing will be

undertaken in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR and current statutory information-sharing guidance.

6.3 EH has a legal duty to refer any individual working in Regulated Activity if there is evidence that they have harmed, or pose a risk of harming, children. Referrals will be made promptly and in accordance with statutory requirements, ensuring that individuals who pose a risk cannot continue in Regulated Activity.

6.4 All individuals delivering or participating in EH activities, events, programmes, or competitions, whether they are a Member or not, must follow the same reporting and referral procedures.

6.5 Schools and colleges operating under the Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory framework (2026) must ensure EH safeguarding procedures are considered when EH staff or programmes are involved.

6.6 EH operates in anticipation of forthcoming mandatory reporting legislation. Failure to report serious safeguarding concerns is considered a breach of this policy and may result in disciplinary action or referral to statutory agencies.

6.7 EH will review and update reporting procedures in line with statutory changes to ensure ongoing compliance and best practice.

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APPENDIX

Definitions

Adult	Any person aged 18 or over.
Board / EH Board	The Board of Directors of England Hockey.
Child / Young Person	Anyone under 18 years of age, in accordance with UK law.
Children's Social Care / Children's Services	Local authority statutory services responsible for receiving referrals, assessing risk, and coordinating safeguarding actions for children and young people.
Club	A hockey organisation which is a Member of England Hockey through which players, coaches, officials, and volunteers participate.
Connected Participant	Any individual participating in hockey activity under England Hockey's jurisdiction, including players, coaches, umpires, officials, staff, volunteers, contractors, parents/carers, and delivery partners.
DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service)	The government body responsible for criminal records checks and managing barred lists for people working or volunteering with children and adults.
England Hockey	The National Governing Body for the sport of hockey in England.
EH Safeguarding Team	England Hockey staff responsible for safeguarding case management, advice, referrals, and implementation of EH safeguarding policy.
Enhanced DBS Check	A criminal record check that includes Police information and, where relevant, barred list information, required for individuals in regulated or supervisory roles with children.
LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)	A statutory officer responsible for managing and overseeing allegations against adults working or volunteering with children.

Low-level concern	A concern about an adult's behaviour or practice that does not meet the threshold for abuse or misconduct but may indicate poor practice, boundary concerns or potential risk if not addressed.
Member	Any individual, association, club or organisation formally admitted to membership of England Hockey in accordance with its articles and membership rules.
Non-Member	Any individual, corporation, association, club or organisation involved in hockey activity who is not a Member of EH or any EH Member body.
Parent / Carer	A person with parental responsibility or day-to-day care for a child or young person.
Position of Trust	A role in which an adult has authority, supervision, or responsibility over a child or young person. Abuse of a Position of Trust may constitute a criminal offence. Sexual or romantic relationships with 16 or 17-year-olds by adults in positions of trust are prohibited and may also result in criminal and disciplinary action.
Regulated Activity	Specific roles or activities defined in law that involve close and unsupervised contact with children and require an Enhanced DBS with barred list check.
Safeguarding	Actions to protect children from abuse, neglect, and exploitation, prevent harm to their health or development, and ensure safe and effective care to enable positive outcomes.
EH Safeguarding Disciplinary Regulations	England Hockey procedures that govern the investigation and management of safeguarding-related conduct concerns.
EH Disciplinary Regulations	England Hockey procedures that govern the investigation and management of red cards and misconduct complaints.
Spirit of Hockey - Code of Conduct	England Hockey's Code of Conduct and behavioural values expected of all individuals involved in hockey.
Statutory Agencies	Public bodies legally responsible for safeguarding children, including Police, Children's Social Care, health services, and the DBS.

Volunteer	An individual who gives their time without financial reward (other than reasonable expenses) to support hockey delivery or governance.
Welfare Officer	The nominated person within a club, county/area, region, or England Hockey responsible for promoting safeguarding practice, supporting safe recruitment, and managing/reporting concerns.

Links to Support

Safeguarding & Child Protection

NSPCC Sport
www.thecpsu.org.uk : Advice and support on safeguarding children in sport.

NSPCC Helpline
0808 800 5000 - www.nspcc.org.uk : If you're worried about a child; free, confidential advice and support.

Childline
0800 1111 - www.childline.org.uk : 1-to-1 counselling and self-help toolkits for under 19s.

Anti-Bullying Alliance
0808 1000 143 - www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk : Help and guidance on bullying and cyberbullying.

Mental Health & Crisis Support

Samaritans
08457 90 90 90 - www.samaritans.org : Confidential emotional support for anyone in distress.

Together All
www.togetherall.com - Safe, moderated online community for mental health support.

NHS Children & Young People's Mental Health Services (CYPMHS)
See local NHS pages: NHS-funded support; access via local services, social care or GP.

Mind
0300 123 3393 - www.mind.org.uk/information-support/helplines : Information and support for mental health problems.

Young Minds
www.youngminds.org.uk : Mental health charity for children and young people.

Shout (24/7 text service)
giveusashout.org : Text-based crisis support for adults and children.

Papyrus (prevention of young suicide)
www.papyrus-uk.org : Advice, text service and helpline for young people and those supporting them.

Domestic Abuse & Harmful Practices

National Domestic Violence Helpline
0808 2000 247 : www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk : 24-hour support run by Women's Aid and Refuge.

Forced Marriage Unit
0207 008 0151 : www.fco.gov.uk/forcedmarriage : Government advice line and guidance.

Karma Nirvana
0800 5999 247 : www.karmanirvana.org.uk : Support for victims of forced marriage and honour-based abuse.

Women's Aid
0808 2000 247 : www.womensaid.org.uk : Information and support relating to domestic abuse.