British Biathlon Union Safeguarding Children Policy

July 2025

2nd Edition

Updates:

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January 2021	1st Edition
February 2023	2nd Edition Biennial review with the following updates: 1.5 FGM legal reporting requirement 1.6 Abuse of elite athletes 1.11 Trips away with children 1.12 General guidance including: Use of photographic equipment and recording images Transporting children and young people Missing children See also: BBU Safeguarding Adults Policy 1st Edition April 2023
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Produced using guidance from the Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) of the NSPCC (Registered Charity 216401)

The guidance is correct at the time of publication (January 2021, updated as listed) and will be reviewed every two years or when there is a significant change in legislation.

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1.1 Introduction

All those involved in British Biathlon should be aware of and ensure compliance with other relevant good practice guidance relating to children and young people including:

- *Safer Recruitment*
- *Communication guidance*
- *Social media guidance*
- *Anti-bullying*

A child is anyone who has not yet reached the age of 18.

The following terms are interchangeable throughout the Policy: Coaches/Instructors; Parent/Carer; Employee/Volunteer.

The abbreviation SO relates to the Safeguarding Officer.

The British Biathlon Union's Responsibility

Everyone who participates in the activities of the BBU is entitled to do so in an enjoyable and safe environment. The BBU has a moral and legal obligation to ensure that, when given responsibility for children, coaches and volunteers, it provides them with the highest possible standard of care.

The BBU is committed to devising and implementing policies so that everyone in the sport accepts their responsibility to safeguard children from harm and abuse. This means following procedures to protect them and reporting any concerns about their welfare to appropriate authorities.

The aim of the policy is to promote good practice and to help everyone in our sport understand the issues involved, and implement the safeguarding measures necessary to provide children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst involved in the activities of the BBU. It aims to allow staff and volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific safeguarding and child protection issues. It will help to maintain professionalism and high standards of practice.

The BBU will:

- Appoint a Safeguarding Lead (SL) and Safeguarding Officer (SO)
- Disseminate safeguarding information as required
- Provide support, guidance and training through recognised child protection training providers for those who require it including Safeguarding and Coaching staff.
- Ensure all cases of poor practice that may be abuse and any allegations of abuse are investigated and where appropriate, referred to other agencies
- Convene a Disciplinary Panel when necessary
- Convene a Case Management Panel when necessary
- Deal with all allegations and make decisions within agreed timescales, according to our Disciplinary procedure
- Keep a list of all suspended, disciplined and disqualified persons and where appropriate refer people to the Disclosure and Barring Service and other relevant government agencies
- Recognise the role and responsibilities of the statutory agencies in safeguarding children and young people and work with them and make referrals to them where appropriate
- Monitor and evaluate the implementation of this Policy.

The BBU values and is very grateful for the commitment volunteers make to our sport and the considerable time they give to help ensure children have opportunities to participate.

The practices, procedures and guidance within this policy, the safeguarding section of our website and our reporting procedures are based on the principles contained within UK and International legislation and government guidance. The BBU works with the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) and is committed to maintaining the Advanced Level of the Standards for Safeguarding Children in Sport.

Your responsibility:

All individuals and affiliated organisations are required to:

- Implement and actively promote this safeguarding policy and other safeguarding information to its members
- Ensure safeguarding children is their top priority and embedded into all practices
- Ensure all children, parents, coaches and staff are aware of the BBU SO and SL
- Ensure they follow BBU Recruitment guidance including DBS disclosures (where applicable) and references
- Ensure everyone is aware it is not their responsibility to determine if abuse has taken place, but it is their responsibility to report and act on any concerns they have
- Ensure BBU reporting procedures are followed.

If you suspect a child is being abused, doing nothing is not an option.

1.2 BBU Safeguarding Policy Statement

The BBU acknowledges our duty of care to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice.

The policy recognises the welfare and interests of children and young people are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that regardless of age, ability or disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, socioeconomic status, sex or sexual orientation all children and young people.

BBU Safeguarding Policy Aims

All children and vulnerable adults have a positive and enjoyable experience in a safe environment.

Are protected from abuse whilst participating in any activity within the auspices of the BBU.

The BBU acknowledges that some children, including talented athletes, children with disabilities or those from ethnic minority communities can be particularly vulnerable to abuse and accepts the responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare.

The BBU will:

- Promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people;
- Ensure training and support are provided for all affiliated coaches and instructors so they are aware of, and understand best practice and how to manage any concerns;

- Take all reasonable steps to protect children from harm, discrimination and degrading treatment and to respect their rights, wishes and feelings;
- Ensure all cases of poor practice that may be abuse and any allegations of abuse are investigated and where appropriate, referred to other agencies;
- Support the person raising or disclosing the concern;
- Ensure all those in a position of responsibility throughout the organisation recognise it is not their responsibility to determine if abuse has occurred, but it is their responsibility to report and act on any concerns they have;
- Ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records are kept of all safeguarding concerns and maintained and stored securely.

The BBU recognises that working in partnership with affiliated organisations, committees, parents and children is essential for the protection of children and young people.

This policy will be widely promoted and is mandatory for everyone involved in BBU activities that involve children or vulnerable adults. Failure to comply with the policy will be addressed without delay and may result in disciplinary action and exclusion from the organisation. The welfare of children and young people (anyone under the age of 18) is paramount.

This policy applies to all BBU staff and volunteers working for us and to members of all organisations affiliated to us or taking part in activities of any of these organisations. It applies to all BBU registered coaches, and non-registered coaches if working or volunteering in a role for any of the above.

For the avoidance of doubt this includes athletes and anyone working within the sport in a paid or voluntary capacity whether as an employee or on a self-employed basis.

1.3 Promoting Good Practice - Everyone's Responsibility

The BBU want to ensure everyone working with children and young people within our sport has the best possible experience. Everyone should feel able to ask for advice about how to improve their practice when working with children and should engender a culture of mutual support.

All those working in a position of trust with children must ensure that:

- All children are treated equally and with dignity and respect;
- Good practice is promoted, in order to reduce the possibility of abusive situations occurring;
- They always work in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encourage open communication with no secrets);
- They make the experience of biathlon fun and enjoyable and promote fairness;
- They confront and deal with bullying;
- They are an excellent role model, including not swearing, smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people;
- They always put the welfare of the child first, before winning; the child's welfare being paramount;
- They build a balanced relationship based on mutual trust, which empowers young people to share in the decision-making process;
- They, along with every coach, volunteer, official and member of staff continually reflect upon their own practice to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children at all times;

- They keep up to date with technical skills relative to coaching/other qualifications and insurance;
- They are aware of the power that a coach, volunteer or official develops with participants in biathlon and avoid any inappropriate or intimate interaction;
- They always give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism;
- They promote good sportsmanship, encouraging children to be considerate of other athletes, officials and volunteers and by being modest in victory and gracious in defeat;
- They avoid unnecessary physical contact with children. Where any form of manual/physical support is required, it should be provided openly and with the consent of the child. Physical contact can be appropriate where necessary in the sport, so long as it is neither intrusive nor disturbing and the child's consent has been given;
- They obtain written parental consent for any significant travel arrangements including overnight arrangements;
- If mixed teams are taken away, children are always accompanied by a male and female member of staff;
- They use social media appropriately and follow the BBU policy and guidance for this;
- They abide by all BBU Policies and Agreements;
- They abide by the appropriate Code of Conduct;
- They take all concerns seriously and report any concerns relating to child safeguarding immediately;
- They 'whistle blow' if children's welfare or safety is being compromised;
- They help the BBU work towards eradicating harassment and abuse of children in biathlon.

Poor practice can sometimes lead to or create an environment conducive to more serious abuse. It may lead to suspicions about the individual's motivation, even where no harm is intended. For example, if a coach is giving one child too much attention, or regularly transports children in their car, or encourages physical contact with children without obvious justification. These are all examples of poor practice and may be difficult to justify if an allegation is made.

The following are examples of poor practice. All those working in a position of trust should never:

- Spend excessive amounts of time alone with one child away from others;
- Take children to your home where they will be alone with you;
- Take a child alone in a car with you (unless it is an emergency);
- At an away event, go into a child's room without another adult in a position of responsibility (unless it is an emergency), or invite a child into your room;
- Share a room with a child;
- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay;
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form;
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun;
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged;
- Be friends with a child on social media;
- Communicate by phone or social media with a child who is under 18;
- Reduce a child to tears as a form of control;
- Take part in, or tolerate, behaviour that frightens, embarrasses or demoralises a child or affects their self-esteem;

- Fail to act upon any allegations made by a child or fail to record it;
- Shower with a child;
- Do things of a personal nature that the child can do for themselves;
- Engage in a sexual relationship with anyone under the age of 18 for whom you have responsibility – this would be a disciplinary offence. Engaging in sexual relationships with a child under the age of 16 is a criminal offence and will be reported to the Police.

Any of these situations could leave you open to allegations and many of these actions may be difficult to defend and could result in disciplinary action and in some situations, reported to the Police.

Remember, if you are a coach or in a position of responsibility, you must always behave professionally whilst in the presence of those who are under the age of 18. This applies whether it is a BBU activity or not.

Where cases arise where it is impractical or impossible to avoid certain situations, the task should only be carried out with the full understanding and written consent of the parent and the child involved. The BBU Secretary General and Safeguarding Officer must be informed.

The reasons for deviating from the above good practice should be risk assessed, documented and made available on request to the relevant people concerned.

If during your care you accidentally hurt a child, a child seems distressed in any manner, appears to be sexually aroused by your actions, or if the child misunderstands or misinterprets something you have said or done, report this as soon as possible to another colleague and make a written note of it. The SO must be informed as soon as possible and in most cases parents should also be informed of the incident.

Child abuse can arouse strong emotions. The BBU recognises it is important to understand these feelings and not allow them to interfere with our judgement about the appropriate action to take.

1.4 Positions of Trust

Appropriate behaviour and boundaries must be upheld by anyone in a position of trust within the BBU or affiliated organisation. Positions of trust would include, but are not limited to: coaches, people assisting with coaching, managers and supervisors, physios, sports psychologists etc.

Coaches in particular need to ensure they understand the power and influence they may have over children they are coaching. In a competitive environment this dependency will be increased. The relationship, in essence, is no different to that between a school teacher and pupils in their care.

Most adults in a position of trust recognise the boundaries that must not be crossed in terms of the relationship with the young person. Young coaches should be supported to understand these boundaries. Although children over 16 can legally consent to sexual activity, it is inappropriate and extremely poor practice for an adult in a position of trust to engage in a relationship with them, and would be subject to disciplinary action. Whilst the coach-athlete relationship exists, coaches must not enter into an intimate relationship with athletes under the age of 18. In some cases the relationship could be considered criminal and would be referred to statutory agencies.

The NSPCC continue to lobby Government via their “Close the Loophole” campaign to amend the “Position of Trust” definition to include sport. If this campaign is successful, the legislation will be

changed, bringing sports coaches in line with teachers and other professionals and it will be a criminal offence for anyone within a sport setting to engage in sexual activity with someone aged 16 or 17, over whom they hold a position of trust.

The BBU actively discourages athletes engaging in sexual relationships for the duration of a residential trip, even if they are legally married or in a civil partnership. This recommendation is to help coaches and house parents with decision-making and ensure all athletes are treated equitably, and work as part of a team whist on residential trips.

Everyone within the BBU has a duty to raise concerns about the behaviour of any member which may be harmful to young people in their care, without prejudice to their own position.

1.5 Child Abuse

Children with disabilities, elite athletes, children in Care, children from black and mixed ethnic backgrounds and children who have previously suffered abuse are all at increased risk of harm.

Children whose parents are suffering from mental health problems, pressure, drug or alcohol abuse or domestic violence within the family are also at increased risk of harm. However – just because a child is living in these circumstances does not mean they are suffering harm.

There are four main types of child abuse: physical, emotional, neglect and sexual abuse.

Children and young people can also be harmed through poor practice and bullying within a biathlon setting.

Physical Child Abuse - When someone physically hurts or injures a child by hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, biting, or other physical harm of a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

In biathlon, physical abuse may occur where the level and intensity of training or competition exceeds the capacity of the child's immature and growing body, or where coaches encourage the use of drugs or harmful substances to enhance a child's performance, or athletes being told to participate when injured.

Emotional child abuse - This is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve telling a child they are worthless, unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may involve unrealistic expectations for their age or development being imposed on children or even the over protection of a child. Or causing the child to feel frightened or in danger by constantly being shouted at, threatened or taunted which may make the child very nervous and withdrawn.

There is a degree of emotional abuse involved in all types of child abuse, though it can occur alone.

In biathlon emotional abuse may occur if children are subjected to constant criticism or name calling, sarcasm, bullying, racism or pressure to perform to unrealistically high expectations; or when their value or worth is dependent on sporting success or achievement.

Neglect - This is when adults consistently or repeatedly fail to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, which could result in the serious impairment of the child's health or

development. It may involve failure to provide adequate food, clothing or shelter; failure to protect a child from physical or emotional harm or danger; failure to adequately supervise children.

Within biathlon neglect may occur if a coach or supervisor repeatedly fails to ensure children are safe or supervised; subjecting children to undue cold or extreme weather conditions without ensuring adequate clothing or hydration; exposing children to unnecessary risk of injury e.g. by ignoring safe practice guidelines; requiring children to perform when tired, injured or unwell, or pushing the child too hard or beyond their capability or failing to seek medical help when required.

Sexual abuse - This is where children and young people are abused by adults (male or female) or other children who use them to meet their own sexual needs. It could include full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse, kissing, sexual fondling and grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Showing children pornographic material (books, videos, pictures) or involving the child in the production of sexual images, watching sexual activities, looking at sexual material or participating in sexual discussions are also forms of sexual abuse.

Boys and girls can be sexually abused. Men, women and children can be the abusers. The shame of sexual abuse often prevents children from coming forward. Unfounded accusations of sexual abuse are not common; if a child confides in you, take him or her seriously.

It should be noted that some individuals deliberately target sports activities to gain access to, and abuse children. Grooming may occur over several years before an individual makes his or her move. There is evidence within sport that some individuals have deliberately ignored governing body codes of practice and used physical contact within a coaching role to mask their inappropriate touching of children. Contacts made within sport and pursued through texts, WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter etc have been used to groom children for abuse.

Within biathlon coaching techniques which involve physical contact with children can create situations where sexual abuse can be disguised and may therefore go unnoticed. The power and authority of, or dependence on the coach if misused, may also lead to abusive situations developing. It is inappropriate for coaches and others to ask young people about their boyfriends and girlfriends and in some cases, this could be part of a grooming process.

Remember, it is not your responsibility to determine if abuse has occurred, but it is your responsibility to report and act on any concerns you have.

Bullying - Bullying can occur whenever children and young people come together, including within sport situations. Bullying can take many forms and is harmful to the victim. It may be physical such as hitting; online or cyber such as abusive messages, comments or images on social media; involve damage or theft of property; be based on someone's gender, ethnicity, sexuality or disability; or be about their sporting ability.

The competitive nature of biathlon makes it an ideal environment for bullies to operate in. Bullying will not be tolerated; coaches must challenge bullies and support anyone who experiences bullying.

Increasingly there is a range of specific areas of concern that children may be being abused that you need to be aware of, some of which are summarised below:

Cyber-bullying: When a person or group of people use the internet, mobile phone, online games or other kind of digital technology to threaten, tease, upset or humiliate someone else. It is a form of bullying but because it happens online or on mobile phones can happen 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It can be done anonymously by blocking the sender's details or setting up a fake account. There is however always a trail, and children should be asked to keep the e mails, abusive texts and messages and seek help.

Hazing: Hazing refers to any activity expected of someone on joining a group, or maintaining status in a group, that humiliates, degrades or risks emotional and/or physical harm, regardless of the person's willingness to participate. It is known that hazing exists in schools, universities and in sports environments. Typical hazing activities include sleep deprivation, personal servitude, binge drinking and drinking games, being forced to wear embarrassing attire, carry out dangerous stunts and sexual assault.

Child sexual exploitation: the request/demand/performing of any sexual act of an under 18 year old, in exchange for any type of reward, monetary or otherwise, including a threat not to carry out an action (e.g. sending pictures of the child to others). Larger police services have specific units to deal with these concerns.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): An illegal procedure which involves the partial or complete removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. This usually takes place between infancy and 15 years of age, but can be performed on older girls. Traditionally it is carried out in 29 countries in Africa and parts of Asia, Latin America and the Middle East. Due to migration, FGM is now practiced globally. If FGM is disclosed it must be immediately reported to the police.

Racist or homophobic abuse: usually verbal and can be threatening in its use.

Self-harm: self-inflicted cutting, scratching, injecting or other types of self-physical harm including drug misuse.

1.6 Abuse of Elite Athletes

Elite athletes are particularly vulnerable to abuse. A number of researchers over the years have highlighted the particular vulnerability of those young people participating at an elite level in sport, and the justifications behind the strenuous training environment these young people may have to experience, without any consideration to the negative impact it may be having on the child's development.

Potentially abusive situations can arise when a coach develops training programmes and schedules for attending competitions that are focused on the goals of the sport to achieve success rather than the needs of the child. There have been great strides made in challenging the "no pain no gain" culture within sport, and it must be challenged where it is detrimental to the welfare of young athletes.

Many elite athletes in sport are afraid of their coach or feel intimidated by them. Due to the culture of sport sometimes an ethos exists which facilities power, obedience and potentially the rationalisation of abuse which can be more prevalent at the elite level. Reports in other sports of coaches "crossing the line" include social outings, time in hot tubs, hugs, kisses, texts/phone calls and highly personal conversations irrelevant to the athlete's participation in sport.

Research confirms previous studies and indicates significantly higher levels of inter personal violence (psychological, physical and sexual) experiences by disabled, LGBT, ethnic minority and international level young athletes. Vertommen et al (2015).

There is evidence in other sports that adults have used their position of authority to abuse children. For example, the events surrounding the prosecution of Paul Hickson, a former Olympic swimming coach, triggered the NSPCC study "In at the deep end". It looked at 78 cases of alleged child abuse made to the Amateur Swimming Association over a four year period and found that there was a 'significant minority of children and young people suffering sexual, emotional and verbal abuse at the hands of those in respected and powerful positions within the sport', and that in the case of child sexual abuse there can be a process of grooming by coaches who manipulate the relationship developed over a period of years.

The report also suggests that these insights are not specific to swimming and can probably be generalised to other sports. At the elite level, a young person's commitment is expected and assumed, but in situations where this operates within an established culture of risk, such commitment can be abused physically, sexually or emotionally.

Suitable boundaries must be maintained and poor or dangerous practice removed from. Most child abuse is by family members or people they know, away from a sport environment however research by Professor Brackenridge on the sexual harassment and abuse of women in sport suggests it is the close personal relationship of trust that develops between athletes and coaches, and the highly competitive nature of relationships between athletes that can leave some athletes vulnerable to abuse.

In children where there is an inevitable imbalance of power between coaches and athletes, these effects could be exacerbated. The literature also contains insights into the range of sexually abusive practices that might happen to children in sport, including sexual bullying between athlete and coach and athlete and athlete, sexist jokes and language and the use of sex to control athletes.

1.7 Recognising Child Abuse

Recognising child abuse is not easy. Below are some guidelines and common indicators of abuse.

Most children will collect cuts and bruises as part of the rough and tumble of everyday life. Injuries should be interpreted considering the child's medical and social history, developmental stage and the explanation given. Most accidental injuries occur over bony parts of the body, e.g. elbows, knees, shins, and are usually on the front of the body. With the exception of the physical signs (bruising, bites, scalds etc) you should primarily be concerned with changes in a child's behaviour. Some children may always have difficulty in interacting with other children. Indicators that a child may be being abused include the following:

- Unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body
- Multiple bruises, in clusters, often on the upper arm or outside of the thigh
- Cigarette burns
- Human bite marks
- Broken bones
- Scalds with upward splash marks
- Multiple burns with a clearly demarcated edge
- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts
- Flinching when approached or touched

- Fear of being left with a specific person or group of people
- Reluctance to get changed
- Depression or withdrawn behaviour
- Saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone
- Sexual knowledge beyond their age or developmental level
- Dirty, smelly or inappropriate clothing for the conditions, or getting their clothes torn
- Pain or itching in the genital area or discomfort when walking or sitting down
- Sulking, hair twisting, rocking, fear of making mistakes, sudden speech disorders
- Fear of parents being approached for an explanation
- Developmental delay in terms of emotional progress
- Complaining of being tired all the time

If a child is being bullied or abused, in addition to the above, the following may be observed:

- Reluctance to go to training or competitions
- An unexplained drop off in performance
- Behavioural changes

This is not a definitive list, but should serve as a guide to assist you. Remember too that many children will exhibit some of these indicators at some time, and the presence of one or two indicators should not be taken as proof that abuse is occurring. There may well be other reasons for changes in behaviour.

There are a number of reasons why you may become aware of a possible case of abuse and these include:

- Something a child has said
- You may see it happening
- Signs or suspicions of abuse
- An allegation made against an employee of the BBU
- An allegation made about a parent or someone not working within the sport
- Response to bullying
- Response to allegations against a staff member of a breach of a code of conduct, or poor practice

AVOID LEADING QUESTIONS

A question that is a “leading question” is one which may prompt the respondent to answer in a particular way and often result in false, biased or distorted information. Children are particularly susceptible to leading questions, for example:

- “Who else is involved?”
- “Did this take place at home?”
- “This has happened before, hasn’t it?”

Instead, ask questions in an objective way to encourage an accurate response:

- “Is anyone else involved?”
- “Where did this take place?”
- “Has this happened before?”

You may witness something yourself, or someone might come to you with their concerns of inappropriate behaviour by a staff member or child

1.8 Responding to the allegation, disclosure or suspicion

Anyone responding to a disclosure, suspicion or allegation must:

1. Stay calm – so as not to frighten the child. Do not show disgust or disbelief
2. Ensure the child is safe and feels safe
3. Reassure the child they are not to blame, and it is right to tell
4. Be honest, do not say you can keep a secret, but say you may need to tell someone else for them to be helped
5. Listen carefully, showing they are being taken seriously
6. Keep questions to a minimum, only if necessary to clarify what is being said. Avoid asking leading questions. The law is very strict and child abuse cases have been dismissed where it is felt that the child has been led or words and ideas have been suggested during questioning.
7. Keep an open mind, do not make assumptions or judgements
8. If the child needs urgent medical help – call an ambulance. Inform doctors of the concern and ensure they are aware it is a Child Protection issue.
9. If you are concerned for the **immediate safety** of the child, call the Police, 999.

NEVER:

- Approach any alleged abuser to discuss the concern
- Make promises to the child you cannot keep
- Rush into actions that may be inappropriate

Remember to maintain confidentiality; only tell others if it will help protect the child.

1.9 Recording the relevant information

Any information passed to the BBU, children's social care, the Police, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) etc must be as helpful and accurate as possible. It is important to write down as much information at the time, or as soon as possible afterwards. Information recorded must include:

- Details of the child (name, address, gender, date of birth, home telephone number)
- Details of the parent or guardian (name, address, telephone number)
- Whether the parents/guardian have been informed
- Details of the person expressing their concern
- Details of the nature of the allegation – what you are told, use the exact words if you can, or observations
- Description of any visible bruising or other injuries

- Details of the person alleged to have caused the incident or injury (name, address, date of birth/approximate age, telephone number – if you are able to get this information without arousing suspicion)
- Witnesses to the incident
- Times, dates and other relevant information
- It must be clearly documented what is fact, or you have been told, and what is opinion or hear-say
- A signature, date and time on the report

1.10 Reporting the relevant information

It is recognised that strong emotions can be aroused, particularly in cases where sexual abuse is suspected or where there is misplaced loyalty to a colleague. It is important to understand these feelings, but not allow them to interfere with your judgement about any action to take.

If you are concerned for the immediate welfare of a child, dial 999 and say it is a child protection concern. Keep a note of the name and job title of the person you spoke to, and the crime reference number. For other concerns:

- Information should be shared on a strictly need to know basis and other than to protect a child, should remain confidential. If you receive any media enquiries refer these straight on to the BBU Secretary General or SL.
- Only tell people who "need to know" to safeguard the child. This will not usually include any other staff.
- Ensure anyone you share the information with understands the need for confidentiality
- If the parents are not implicated, let them know your concerns, unless it would put the child at further risk to do so
- ALWAYS – let the BBU SO or SL know. He/she may need to take further steps to ensure children at other organisations or facilities are safe, or may need to report it to Statutory Services.

If you become aware that someone may not be suitable to work or be around children – e.g. you read something in the paper, or hear something about someone, and this person is involved within biathlon in any capacity including parent, participant, competitor, coach, committee member, official etc – ALWAYS report it to the BBU SO or SL – don't assume someone else has.

Who to report concerns to:

- Always report concerns to the SO or SL
- In an emergency, the Police/Children's' Social Care (and let the BBU SO or SL know at the earliest opportunity)
- If a criminal offence has taken place report it to the Police.

It is often only by seeing the larger picture, that someone is identified as a potential risk to children.

You should record the details and forward a copy to the BBU SL who will:

1. Record the concern

2. See if any other incidents have been reported
3. Advise if there is any further action you should take
4. Where appropriate, deal with the matter themselves
5. Where appropriate, refer the matter to the Police, Children's Social Care or the LADO (via the BBU SO or SL).
6. Where appropriate, start Disciplinary Proceedings.

Remember, it is not your responsibility to determine if abuse has occurred, but it is your responsibility to report and act on any concerns you have.

If you are concerned a child may be being abused outside biathlon, follow the same procedures for reporting. If you are concerned for the immediate welfare of a child, dial 999 and say it is a child protection concern.

Useful contact numbers are given at the end of this Policy.

Consideration should be given to the support required for everyone affected by the disclosure. This includes the young person, the person reporting, other athletes and potentially the alleged perpetrator of the abuse. Contact the BBU SL for further information. The NSPCC can be contacted 24/7 for advice or guidance.

Possible Outcomes of Safeguarding Investigations

- No case to answer
- Complaint resolved with agreement between parties
- Training/mentoring agreed
- More significant concerns emerged – refer to BBU SL

Possible processes for Serious Poor Practice or Alleged Child Abuse

- Child Protection Investigation
- Criminal Investigation/proceedings
- Investigations under disciplinary proceedings
- Referral to Case Management Panel for consideration of suspension/disciplinary

Possible Outcomes

- No case to answer
- Complaints, Disciplinary Procedure invoked
- Sanctions/suspension
- Civil or criminal proceedings

1.11 Trips away with children

The lead responsible adult has a duty of care' as well as a legal responsibility under the Children Act for the safety and well-being of the athletes at all times. The lead responsible adult is responsible for ensuring the child safeguarding policy and procedures are being followed and in the event of an incident will be held to account. They are responsible for the welfare of the children and must ensure there are sufficient staff members on the trip.

The lead responsible adult may be the Team Manager, Coach or another person, but must be agreed for each camp. All staff working with children will have been vetted in accordance with BBU Policy and should ensure they are fully aware of this Safeguarding Children Policy. Current advice regarding physical contact with children should be followed. Adults should be aware of, and abide by, the relevant Code of Conduct. Be aware at all times of possible tensions within the group. Biathlon is an individual sport, and its competitive nature may lead to jealousies and to bullying. Boys and girls should be in separate sleeping quarters, and children must not share rooms with adult staff members or adult athletes*.

*Where there is only one U18 athlete it is accepted it may be preferable for them to share with an athlete over the age of 18 of the same gender rather than be in a room by themselves. However it must be stressed to all concerned that members of the opposite gender must not enter their room. Where under 18s are sharing with over 18s, parents must be informed of the situation and their permission sought, as well as the permission of the athletes (under 18 and over 18).

Staff should not go into the bedrooms of children without another staff member present (unless it is an emergency). At least one staff member should be with the children at all times of the day, or at least within very easy reach. The children must at all times know the whereabouts of at least one of the staff members in case of emergency.

Where there are organised events for the adults (e.g. race/competition managers' meetings) one staff member should remain in the hotel/accommodation with the children and another staff member must be contactable and able to return within ten minutes. No Team Member is allowed to drink alcohol or to purchase or knowingly have alcohol in their possession without the consent of the Team Manager.

Staff should be aware they are role models for the athletes. The laws of the country they are visiting must be adhered to. There must always be at least one responsible adult who has refrained from drinking alcohol in case of emergency.

Insurance documents and contact details should be carried by a staff member at all times in case of accident. The lead responsible adult must carry, or have access to, extra funds in case of any emergency (e.g. hospital treatment of a child).

Clear guidelines for behaviour, curfews, rendezvous times etc must be laid down clearly to the athletes, so they know what is expected of them at all times. Disciplinary measures may at times be necessary, and such procedures must be conducted with fairness.

At least two staff members must be present and involved in any disciplinary matter, and the child should, where possible, be represented by an accompanying adult. All disciplinary measures must be proportionate, and explained fully to the athlete. They must not involve humiliation of athletes, refusal to speak or interact with them or any threat of physical punishment, or being told to go to their room and miss a meal. Examples of acceptable sanctions include: time out; not being able to participate in a social activity or temporary exclusion from the camp. With positive reinforcement of

good behaviour, athletes will behave appropriately. The CPSU has produced guidelines on Managing Challenging Behaviour that can be found here: Managing challenging behaviour | CPSU (thecpsu.org.uk)

The lead responsible adult must have: a copy of the consent forms, emergency contact details, passport details, flight details, travel insurance etc for each athlete.

In addition:

- If athletes have mobile phones, it is advisable for staff to have their number in case of emergency – but this should only be used where necessary and appropriate
- Copies of all emergency contact details
- Athletes should be given mobile telephone numbers of all staff, to be used in an emergency. This is particularly important if athletes are travelling independently from the group.
- Staff and athletes should delete the contact details after the camp.

It is important to remember when planning camps with children that sufficient adults must be present to adequately supervise all participants and manage any incident that may arise.

Prevention is the most important aspect of supervision of children. From the moment the athlete is in your care, staff and volunteers are acting in loco parentis and have a duty of care for them. Appropriate supervision ratios and systems for monitoring the whereabouts of children are essential. It must be clear at all times who in the team is responsible for supervision. This is particularly important in the mountain environment. This ensures at least basic cover in the event of something impacting on the availability of one of the adults during the activity (e.g. in the event of a participant requiring the attention of an adult during the activity following an accident).

Ensuring there are always at least 2 adults present also helps safeguard the adults, in the event of an accusation.

It is recognised occasionally it is not possible to have a member of staff of the same gender as an athlete, particularly where there are only 2 or 3 athletes on the camp. This must be the exception rather than the rule. A risk assessment should be carried out and the reason for the absence of a staff member of the appropriate gender documented. Parents and athletes should be informed prior to the camp and their permission sought.

1.12 General guidance

Guidance on the Use of Photographic Equipment and Recording Images

It is important to acknowledge that parents/carers may wish to take photographs or videos of their own children participating in biathlon events. Coaches may also wish to video athletes as this is a useful coaching aid.

Key Concerns

The key concerns regarding the use of images of children/young people relate to:

- The possible identification of children when a photograph is accompanied by personal information
- The inappropriate use, adaptation or copying of images for use on child pornography or illegal websites
- The taking of inappropriate or unauthorised photographs or recorded images of children
- The identification and locating of children at risk; for example, because they have been removed from their family for their own safety, or there are restrictions on family contact following parental separation, or because they are a witness in criminal proceedings.

There have been concerns about the risks posed directly and indirectly to children through the use of photographs on sports websites and other publications. Photographs can be used as a means of identifying children when they are accompanied with personal information. E.g. “this is X who lives at y, and goes to z school whose other hobbies include mountain biking and cello”. This sort of information can lead to the child being identified and vulnerable to an individual who may wish to start to “groom” that child for abuse.

Photographs and information on the internet have also been used by estranged parents (e.g. in adoption or domestic violence circumstances) to identify, trace and cause significant difficulties for, or harm to children.

The BBU recognises many of our athletes require wide media coverage in order to attract sponsors and followers. It is also recognised that publicity and pictures/recordings of our athletes enjoying biathlon is essential to promote the sport and a healthy lifestyle. However, the following guidelines should be observed.

Guidelines for Photographic and Recorded Images

- There should be signed consent on athlete registration forms for parents/carers and the athletes to show their consent to opt-in to photographs and video recordings being made
- Parents and athletes should be able to ask to opt-out of photographs at camps and races organised by the BBU. However, due to the nature of training and races in a mountain environment, it is not possible to guarantee photographs will not be taken
- All athletes featured in recordings must be appropriately dressed for the activity they are participating in
- Personal details which might make the young person vulnerable, such as their exact address or school should never be revealed
- Coaches should be allowed to use video equipment as a legitimate coaching aid and means of recording special occasions, however care should be taken in the dissemination and storage of the material which come within the Data Protection Act 2018

- You should not use any images of a child or young person known to be the subject of any court order or who has denied you their consent
- Parents and spectators taking photographs and videos should only take them of their own children
- Any instances of the use of inappropriate images should be reported to the BBU Safeguarding Officer and to Children's Social Care or the Police where necessary.

Guidelines for Publishing Photographic and Recorded Images

- If a photograph is used, personal details of children such as an e mail address, home address and telephone numbers should never be revealed on a website or in print.
- It is usual practice to recommend if you name a child in an article, not to include their picture. However for elite athletes it is reasonable to expect athletes to be named alongside a picture (but no other personal information should be included). The exception to this is where consent has been denied.
- Think about the level of consideration that you give to the use of images in all publications, for example the process used in choosing photographs for a publicity brochure. Apply an increased level of consideration to the images of children used on websites.

Guidelines for Transporting Children and Young People

It is important all steps are taken to ensure the safe transport of children and young people. You should be aware in other sports abusers have in the past abused children whilst transporting them, or groomed children whilst transporting them. The following guidance is issued as best practice. It is understood that due to the nature of some BBU camps this best practice cannot always be followed. Where this is the case you must be able to evidence why you did not follow the guidance. Within BBU camps most athletes are transported by bus. The following should be considered:

- If hiring transport, use a reputable company providing necessary insurance
- Where staff are transporting athletes, the BBU will ask for proof of driving convictions, penalty points, overseas insurance
- Where possible ensure sufficient supervisors are on each minibus (male and female if mixed teams)
- Everyone travelling should have a seat and seat belts must be worn by everyone at all times
- Parents/carers/other coaches should be issued with detailed information of drop-off and pick-up points and times
- All staff supervising children should be issued with relevant information of passengers e.g. name/contact number of parent/carer, name/contact number of person who is meeting them (if different), pick-up/drop-off point, medical information, emergency telephone number
- Children must not be dropped off if the person meeting them has not arrived
- An athlete under the age of 18 should not be alone in the vehicle with an adult
- If using mini-buses then consideration must be given to the relevant legislation, both in the UK and abroad. Every effort should be made not to take a child alone in a car or minibus by a staff member, except in an emergency where there is no other adult available to accompany them. If transporting just one child, the child should sit in the back seat of the car/minibus. When transporting athletes, if they have to use the front of the minibus ensure the same athlete does not sit beside the same staff member frequently. This is also to safeguard staff in the event of an allegation.

Guidance on Missing Children

The lead responsible adult must ensure there is clear guidance on reporting missing participants. As a general rule, where a child is reported missing there should be a maximum of 20 minutes before the police are called. In some environments the alarm may need to be raised much sooner or even immediately.

For residential events, it is recommended the lead responsible adult has access to photos of children/young people (attached to their consent form) in the event of them having to report a participant missing to the police. A photocopy of their passport could be used for this purpose.

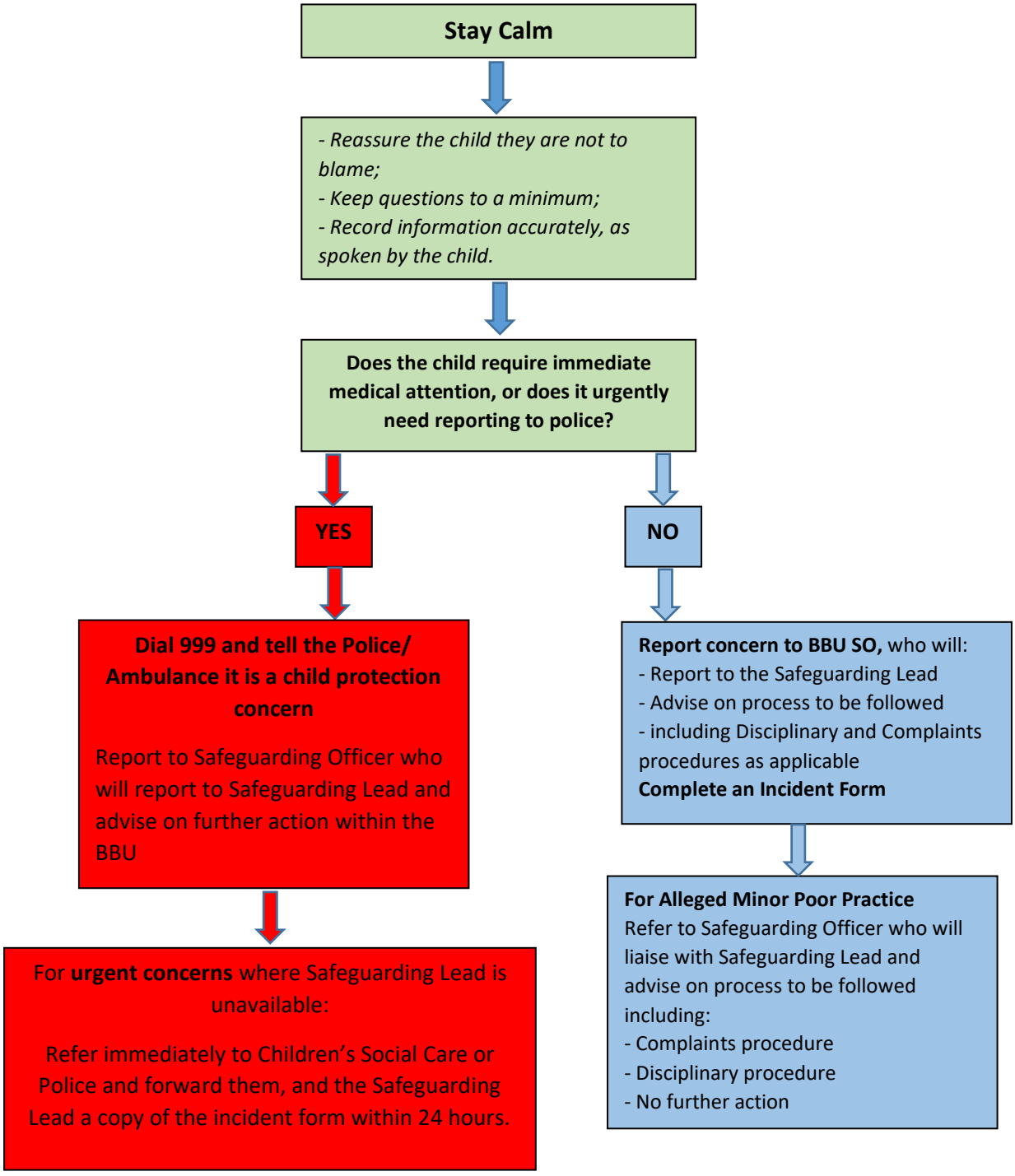
What to do if a young person is suspected of being missing

If the child is missing during an organised event

- Report this to local organising committee straight away
- Do not let other athletes search for the child. Ensure they stay together in a safe place
- Follow the advice of the organising committee, or if necessary organise the remaining adults to conduct a search and report back to you within a short time
- Ensure all other children continue to be supervised appropriately while a search for the child is carried out
- If they have a mobile phone, try ringing them
- Inform the coach or other lead responsible adult
- Make an immediate assessment of the situation. E.g. if the child was seen stepping into an unknown car, inform the Police immediately
- Organise the remaining available adults to conduct a search of the surrounding area allocating each individual to a specific area. Ask them all to report back to you within a short time
- Make a note of the circumstances in which the child has gone missing and where they were last seen. Prepare a detailed physical description of the child, to include their hair and eye colour, approximate height and build and clothing they were wearing, as this will be required by police
- If the child is not found after a thorough search, call the Police – 999, 112, mountain rescue or appropriate number if abroad
- Keep searching, if the child is subsequently found, call off the search and inform relevant parties including searchers, police and parents 9. If the child is not found, follow police guidance if further action is recommended and maintain close contact with the police
- Report this to the Secretary General and complete an incident report form and forward a copy to the BBU Safeguarding Officer and Secretary General (the Police will also require this).

DO NOT SEND OTHER YOUNG PEOPLE TO SEARCH

1.13 FLOWCHART FOR REPORTING IF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE BEHAVIOUR OF A MEMBER OF THE BIATHLON COMMUNITY TOWARDS A CHILD



REMEMBER TO KEEP MATTERS CONFIDENTIAL – STRICTLY ON A NEED TO KNOW BASIS

1.12 Useful Safeguarding Contact Details

BBU Safeguarding Contact Details

BBU Safeguarding Lead	Sarah Greig safeguarding@britishbiathlon.com
DBS application forms or queries	Elizabeth Winfield info@britishbiathlon.com

National Safeguarding Contacts:

Police – Emergency	999 (or emergency EU no 112)
Police – Non emergency local office	101
Local Police Child Protection Team	

National Contacts for Safeguarding

ChildLine UK – 24 hour helpline for children	0800 1111
Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP)	https://ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/
Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU)	0116 234 7278
Kidscape – helpline for adults concerned about bullying	020 7823 5430
NSPCC Freephone – 24 hour helpline for adults concerned about a child	0808 800 5000
The Samaritans (Freephone from mobiles and landlines) NB In an emergency the Samaritans hold the Social Care Duty Officer's contact number	116 123