



Switch the Play Foundation

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy

Last review: July 2020	This review: July 2020	Next Review: January 2021
Approval by Trustees: Yes	Reviewer: Operations Manager	

1 Foreword

Switch the Play Foundation (StP) is a registered charity in the UK. The charity supports sportspeople to develop their life outside of sport to better prepare them for the transition when their sporting career ends. Our vision is:

A world where every sportsperson fulfils their potential at every stage of their lives.

We believe that by focusing on developing your life outside of sport while you are still a competing sportspeople you will not only be better prepared for transition, but also will be a better athlete. StP are a team of experts in the area of athlete transition that includes former professional sportspeople, academic researchers, coaches, mentors, PR consultants and fundraisers to ensure the beneficiaries of the charity receive a high-quality support service. StP is, at the time of writing, the only UK registered charity supporting sportspeople with transition.

By working with sporting organisations, clubs and associations, StP aim to improve the level and accessibility of personal development support available to sportspeople.

The key values that underpin the work that StP does are Excellence, Passion, Person-Centred, Collaboration and Independent. We care for sportspeople of all ages and stages of their athletic career, and we recognise the requirement of us to ensure the safeguarding and welfare of those we work with.

This policy is a statement of intent and includes the steps we aim to implement to ensure that our intentions are realised in everything we do.



2 Definitions

There are a number of terms within the document that are used repeatedly. For clarity, below is a list of terms and their definitions:

The Foundation – this is the registered charity that this policy is written by and for, Switch the Play Foundation

Children – The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child defines a child as everyone under 18 unless, “under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier. In England, Northern Ireland and Wales a child is anyone who has not reached their 18th birthday. In Scotland, a child legally becomes an adult when they turn 16, but statutory guidance includes all children and vulnerable adults up to the age of 18. For the avoidance of doubt, this policy refers to anyone under the age of 18 years old as a child.

Vulnerable Adult – someone who is or may be for any reason unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation. This is someone who is over 18 years old.

3 Policy Statement

StP is committed to safeguarding the welfare of children and vulnerable adults involved in sport and physical activity across the world.

StP acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice.

The policy recognises that the welfare and interests of children and vulnerable adults are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that regardless of age, gender, religion or beliefs, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, or socio-economic background, all children and vulnerable adults:

- Have a positive and enjoyable experience of sport and education with StP in a safe and person-centred environment.
- Are protected from abuse whilst participating in all of the StP services
- StP acknowledges that some children and vulnerable adults, including disabled children, or those from ethnic minority communities, can be particularly vulnerable to abuse and we accept the responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare.

As part of our safeguarding policy StP will:

- Promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults
- Ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and is provided with appropriate learning opportunities to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and vulnerable adults
- Ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents/concerns of abuse and support provided to the individual (or individuals) who raise or disclose the concern.
- Ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored. Safeguarding concern records will be stored in an encrypted system for 10 years and then destroyed.
- Prevent the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals
- Ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation
- The policies and procedures will be widely promoted and are mandatory for everyone involved in StP. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and many ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.

Monitoring

The policy will be reviewed after 6 months after development and then every year, or in the following circumstances:

- Changes in legislation and/or government guidance
- As required by the Local Safeguarding Children Board, NSPCC/Child Protection in Sport Unit, UK Sport and/or Sport England
- As a result of any other significant change or event
- In the event of significant growth of StP as an organisation

4 Policy Aims

Statement of Policy

StP makes the following statements of general policy in relation to child and vulnerable adult protection for all those children and vulnerable adults with whom it comes into contact through its work.

Principles

Children and vulnerable adults have a right to enjoy sport and education free from all forms of abuse and/or harm.

All children and vulnerable adults whatever their age, ethnic origin, disability, gender, language, race, religion or beliefs, and/or sexual orientation have equal rights to protection from harm and/or abuse.

All children and vulnerable adults should be encouraged to fulfil their potential. Inequality will be challenged in whatever form(s) it may emerge.

Whilst it is the responsibility of the child and vulnerable adult protection experts to determine whether or not abuse has taken place, it is everyone's responsibility to support the care and protection of children.

Sporting organisations have a duty of care to children and vulnerable adults who take part in sport.

The welfare of children and vulnerable adults are paramount, including their rights to confidentiality.

StP will:

- accept the moral and legal responsibility to implement procedures to provide a duty of care for children and vulnerable adults safeguard their well-being and protect them from abuse.
- respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of children and vulnerable adults
- recruit, train and supervise our employees and volunteers to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect children and vulnerable adults from abuse and reduce the likelihood of allegations being made against them.
- require all staff, coaches and volunteers to adopt and abide by the appropriate Codes of Conduct and the Child and Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy and Procedures outlined within this document.
- respond to any allegations appropriately and implement the appropriate disciplinary and appeals procedures, in conjunction with local safeguarding children board procedures.
- operate a coordinated response to all safeguarding concerns informing all relevant organisations.
- ensure everybody knows it is everyone's responsibility to report concerns.
- support and protect anyone who in good faith reports their concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child or vulnerable adults according to its Whistleblowing Policy. Those with such concerns should feel able to contact the Safeguarding Lead for an informal discussion without the need to submit a formal report.
- review this policy every year, or whenever there is a major change in the organisation or in relevant legislation or following a significant incident of abuse.



- support any StP worker who is involved in handling actual or alleged incidents of abuse to help them deal effectively with any emotional effects of this work.



5 Compliance with legislation and good practice/guidance

StP will ensure that this policy and our procedures follow the guidance provided in relevant Government legislation and documents and will ensure that our procedures are in line with those outlined by agencies including the NSPCC and the Child Protection in Sport Unit.

StP will work within statutory guidance including the Children Act (2004), Protection of Freedoms Act (2012) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015).



6 Recruitment and selection (staff and volunteers)

StP have appointed a Safeguarding Lead, details of which can be found at the end of this policy. This person has day-to-day responsibility for Safeguarding within the Foundation and all queries regarding Safeguarding should be directed to the designated Safeguarding Lead. This person is responsible for the implementation and management of the Policy, and to ensure the Foundation is operating under best practice guidelines. In the event that this person cannot be reached, then the query should be addressed by the Trustee with responsibility for Safeguarding.

StP will ensure the safe recruitment of staff and volunteers. In order to be employed by or work as an associate, contractor or supplier for StP, all staff will have the following checks made prior to final appointment:

- Qualifications and certificates
- Before an offer of employment is made, at least two confidential references will be sought including at least one regarding the applicant's previous work history.
- Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check (where appropriate)
- Appointment in line with StP's Recruitment policy

All those offered employment in a regulated position will be required to obtain a Disclosure from the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) at a level appropriate to their position. Ideally the Disclosure should be obtained prior to commencement of employment; in all circumstances the applicant must have made application to DBS prior to starting with the Organisation.

All those delivering on behalf of StP should complete the necessary safeguarding training. The Safeguarding Lead is to have a valid safeguarding in sport qualification and is responsible for ensuring those with a duty of care to children are informed via the policy of best practices.

In addition to the above, the StP Induction process includes a requirement to be fully familiar with the StP Safeguarding Policy and Codes of Conduct and any associated documents, guidance, best practice etc. and to sign that staff, associates, contractors and suppliers agree to abide by StP policies and procedures.

StP recognises that, when using volunteers to help with events on a 'one off' or occasional basis that it is not appropriate to undertake the pre-employment checks as above. As a minimum however, all such volunteers will undergo induction training appropriate to the role that they are undertaking and, where relevant, familiarisation with event risk assessments, child protection policy etc.

As a minimum, all such volunteers are required to sign a Self-Disclosure form and their duties are restricted to accompanied access to children (by a member of staff, a Foundation Trustee or lead associate having undergone the above checks).

Copies of the StP Safeguarding policy, self-disclosure forms and information on safeguarding children can be found on the StP website: www.switchtheplay.com

7 Training and Development

All new staff with StP will receive a copy of this Child and Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy and the accompanying procedures as part of their induction, and this will be required reading during the induction process.

Child and vulnerable adult protection training needs will also be identified during induction, and any training needs identified should be fulfilled within 6 months. StP intends that the training given should help staff to:

- Analyse their own practice against established good practice, and to ensure their practice is likely to protect them from allegations.
- Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice or possible abuse.
- Be aware of the procedure for reporting incidents.
- Respond to concerns expressed by a child or vulnerable adults.
- Work safely and effectively with children.

StP requires, and will facilitate, the following training as a minimum:

- Safeguarding Lead to attend a recognised 3-hour Safeguarding and Protecting Young People awareness training workshop (or equivalent approved by the Child Protection in Sport Unit), to ensure their practice is exemplary and to facilitate the development of a positive culture towards good practice in Child Protection.
- Delivery staff to complete a recognised awareness training course on Child Protection.
- Attendance at ongoing training as appropriate (normally every 3 years).

Training of Volunteers

All new volunteers with StP will receive a version of this Policy appropriate to the role they are undertaking, and this will be required reading during the induction process.

Child and vulnerable adult protection training needs will also be identified during induction, and any training needs identified should be fulfilled within an appropriate timescale. StP intends that the training given should help volunteers to:

- Analyse their own practice against established good practice, and to ensure their practice is likely to protect them from allegations.
- Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice or possible abuse.
- Be aware of the procedure for reporting incidents.
- Respond to concerns expressed by a child or vulnerable adults.
- Work safely and effectively with children and vulnerable adults

As the roles of volunteers can vary greatly in nature and duration, the training given will also be tailored to fit the context. Volunteers may be required to complete a recognised awareness training course on child and vulnerable adult protection or be issued with written guidance appropriate to their role and level of access to children.

Supervision of Staff

The working practices of StP mean that it is often not possible for staff to be continuously supervised during the execution of their duties. However, staff are given feedback where



appropriate, and any indications of poor practice are treated as a priority. Detail around the supervisory best practice is provided in point 8.

8 Promoting Good Practice

All StP staff and volunteers should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to safeguard and protect children and vulnerable adults from abuse and reduce the likelihood of allegations being made against them.

Those delivering StP services should not be alone with children. For all masterclass delivery to those under the age of 18, there should be a representative from the relevant body present, in the room (virtual or physical) alongside the StP deliverer. An StP masterclass deliverer has the authority to stop a masterclass to children should this not be the case. With those that are over 18, StP will liaise with the organisation to determine whether there needs to be an organisation representative present during delivery. This is done on a case-by-case basis and is part of our Minimum Operating Standards before any delivery is due to take place.

To deliver StP Coaching and/or mentoring to a child or vulnerable adult on a 1:1 basis, an StP deliverer must have completed an enhanced DBS check and have attended an appropriate and recognised safeguarding education course.

Below are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate within sport – all StP staff and volunteers should be familiar with these principles and be able to articulate them as statements of good practice, whether or not they are directly involved in sporting environments.

Further detailed information on good practice relating to child protection in sport is available on the Child Protection in Sport Unit website <https://thecpsu.org.uk/>. This includes links to excellent resources and publications, including the 'Safe Sport Away' guide for clubs taking children and vulnerable adults away on trips.

For detailed good practice guidance and information relating to supervision ratios for specific sports, reference should be made to the NGB for that sport. The CPSU has also produced generic guidance on supervision ratios which is available from their website.

9 What is child abuse

Child and vulnerable adult abuse is any form of physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm. It commonly occurs within a relationship of trust or responsibility and is an abuse of power or a breach of trust. Abuse can happen to a child or vulnerable adults regardless of age, gender, race or ability.

There are four main types of child abuse:

- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse
- neglect
- bullying

Abuse of disabled children and vulnerable adults, and, instances of bullying, also fall within the wider definition of abuse.

An abuser may be a family member, or they may be someone the child or vulnerable adult encounters in residential care or in the community, including during sports and leisure activities. An individual may abuse or neglect a child or vulnerable adult directly or may be responsible for abuse because they fail to prevent another person harming that child or vulnerable adult.

It is not the responsibility of staff or volunteers of StP to determine whether or not abuse is taking place in any individual situation; it is their responsibility to identify poor practice and possible abuse, and act where they have concerns about the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult by referring this information to the appropriate person or statutory agency.

Advice regarding specific sporting activities

The nature of many sporting activities, and especially the level of physical contact and verbal encouragement involved in many coaching techniques, have led most National Governing Bodies of Sport to formulate guidance for their specific sports relating to Child Protection issues. StP staff and volunteers who have any involvement in these sports should familiarise themselves with these documents by contacting the relevant NGB.

All work conducted by StP will be done so within the guidelines set out by this policy. In situations where STP is contracted to deliver its services for another body, the deliverer should be aware of the safeguarding policy operated by that body. If an StP member of staff or associate should feel there are any conflicts between two policies, they should inform the StP Safeguarding Lead.

10 Recognising signs of abuse

StP recognises that everyone is responsible for safeguarding and protecting children and vulnerable adults. In essence, everyone involved in the delivery of StP services has a responsibility to respond to any concerns that they or others may have about a child or the behaviour of adults.

It is not always easy to recognise that a child is being hurt or is at risk, so abuse is often undetected. There are indicators (signs, symptoms or clues) that when found, either on their own or in various combinations, can point to possible abuse, neglect or family violence.

Indicators can be:

- Physical – such as bruises or burns and relate to a child’s physical condition.
- Behavioural – such as a child cringing or flinching if touched unexpectedly; or a caregiver constantly calling a child ‘stupid’ or ‘dumb’. Behavioural indicators can be displayed by a child or by the alleged abuser

Indicators do not necessarily prove that a child/vulnerable adult has been harmed. They alert us that abuse may have occurred and that a child may require help or protection.

The table below shows some possible indicators/signs of abuse. Some of these are very explicit and specific to the type of abuse. Care is always needed however as there may be other plausible reasons for the signs outlined.

It is not StP’s role to determine if a child/vulnerable adult is being abused but it is our responsibility to record and report any concerns that we may have – following the procedures outlined in this document.

Category of abuse	Physical signs	Behavioural signs
Physical abuse	Unexplained bruising, marks or injury, bruises which reflect hand marks, cigarette burns, bite marks, broken bones and scalds	Fear of parent being contacted, outbursts of aggression or anger, running away, fear of going home, flinching, depression, keeping arms/legs covered, reluctance to change clothes, withdrawn behaviour
Sexual abuse	Pain or itching in the genital area, bruising or bleeding near genital area, sexually transmitted disease, vaginal discharge or infection, stomach pains, discomfort when walking or sitting, pregnancy	Sudden changes in behaviour, child or vulnerable adult becomes withdrawn and aggressive, apparent fear of certain people/person, running away, nightmares, unexplained sources of money, advanced sexual knowledge, language or drawings, eating disorders, self-harm e.g. mutilation, suicide, secrets which cannot be told to anyone, drug abuse, behaving inappropriately for age, telling about the abuse.
Neglect	Constant hunger, unkempt state, weight loss/underweight, inappropriate dress.	Missing appointments at doctors/hospital, truancy/late for school, tiredness or

		fatigue, few friends, regularly alone and unsupervised.
Emotional abuse	Developmentally delayed, sudden speech disorders.	Neurotic or paranoid, unable to take part or play, fear of making mistakes, sudden speech disorders, self-harm or mutilation, fear of parents being contacted.
Bullying	Weight change, unexplained injuries, bruising, stomach and/or headaches, disturbed sleep.	Difficulty making friends, anxiety, withdrawn, depressed, anger or mood swings, suicide attempts.

Children with disabilities, from Minority Ethnic Groups and those performing in elite sport may be particularly vulnerable because they:

Disability	Minority Ethnic Group	Elite Sport
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need personal, intimate care • Have communication difficulties • Have medical needs that are used to explain abuse • May not be believed • Lack of a support network normally more readily available to able-bodied children • Have reduced capacity to resist because of physical or mental abilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience racism • Concerned over raising issues and being ignored or further abused • Ignored by people in authority due to racist attitudes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May spend time away from home • Subject to a close relationship with a coach or mentor • Perform in an adult environment • Experience undue pressure to achieve



11 Reporting child protection/vulnerable adults concerns

If information is disclosed to you it is important that you:

- Stay calm and listen
- Keep brief notes of any conversation (in person, by phone etc.)
- Complete the Child Protection Information Reporting Form (CPIRF) as soon as possible

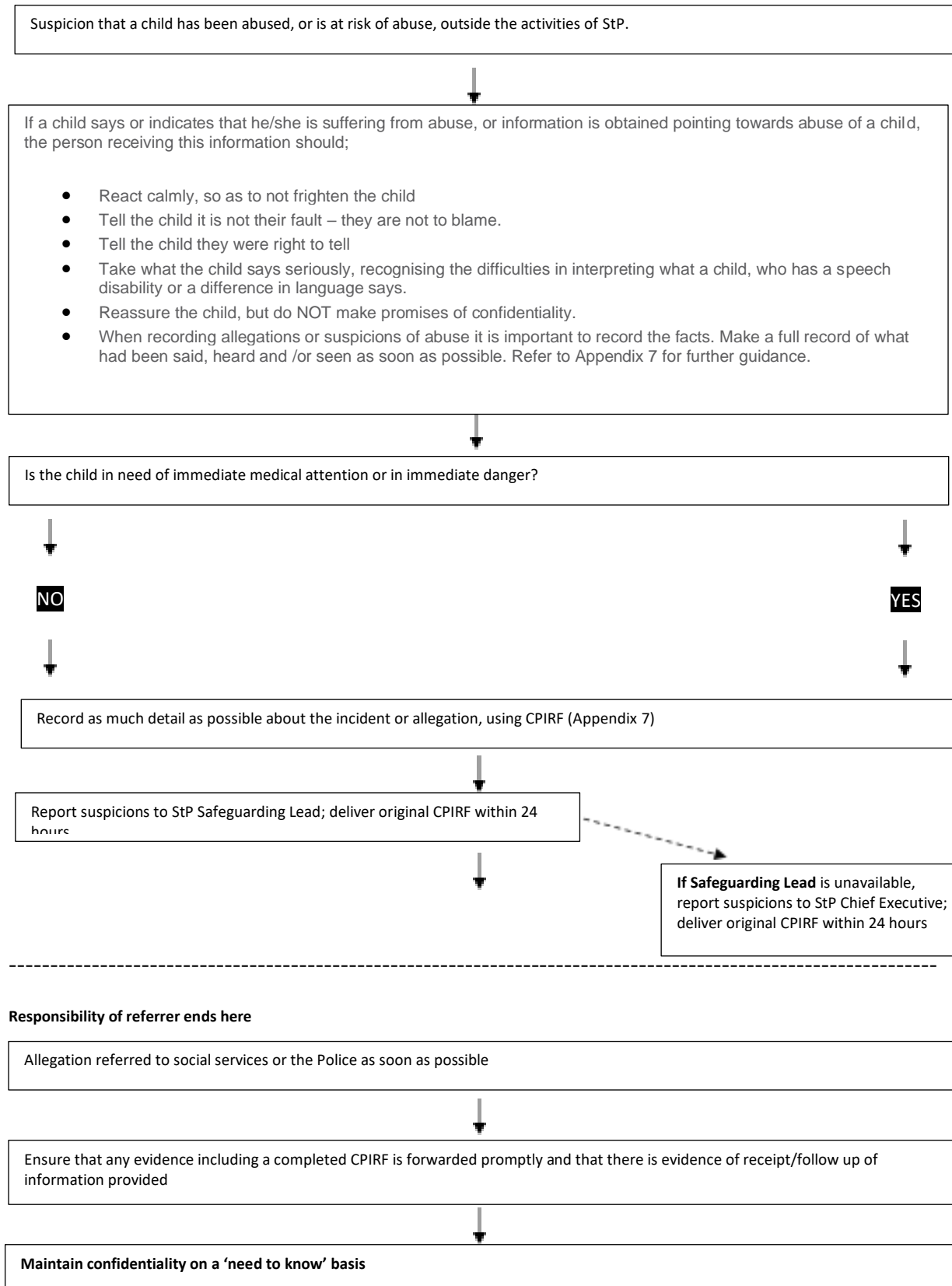
If you feel that there is a serious risk of imminent child abuse or harm to a child, then the statutory agencies must be contacted immediately:

Police – 999 or 101

Otherwise, report your concerns to the designated person as shown below:

- Luke Jennings – Safeguarding Lead for StP: 07826 335750 (available between 09:00 and 17:00 on weekdays)
- If not available, please contact the charity Trustee responsible for Safeguarding: Elizabeth Allen: 07860598342

Reporting Child Protection concerns regarding a child. This reporting process can also be applied to vulnerable adults. For clarity, where ‘child’ is used, this also refers to vulnerable adults.





Allegations of abuse or poor practice made against those who work with children/vulnerable adults

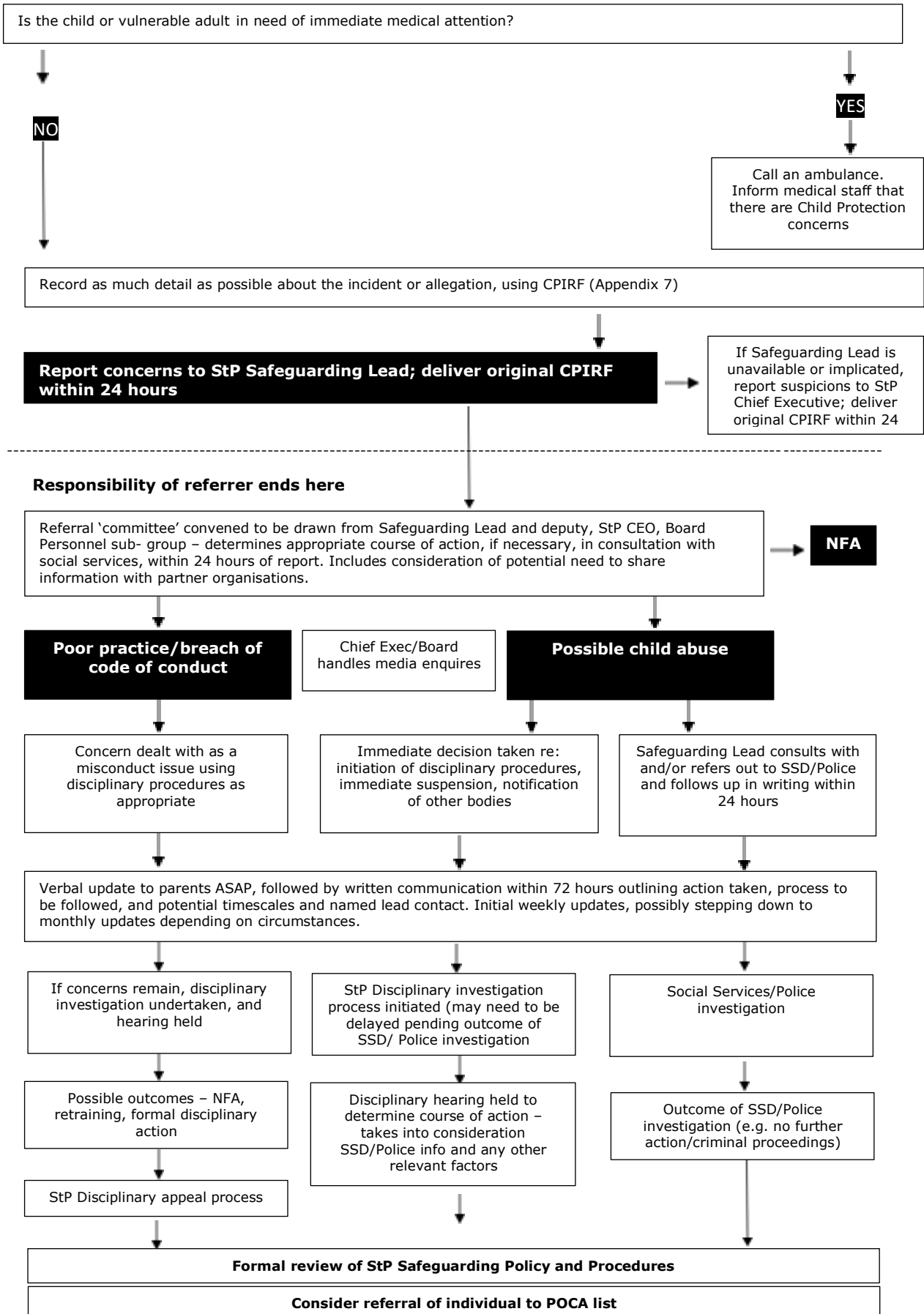
If an employee, coach or volunteer receives an allegation (or has concerns themselves) about the behaviour of a member of staff working with children or vulnerable adults:

- Any suspicion that a child or vulnerable adult has been abused, or is at risk of abuse, by a member of staff, a coach or a volunteer should be reported to the StP Safeguarding Lead (or, in their absence, Trustee responsible for Safeguarding) who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the immediate safety of the child or vulnerable adult in question and any other children who may be at risk.
- Any such report should be made using the Child Protection Incident Report Form (CPIRF), which will enable the individual making the report to ensure they have all the information social services, or the Police will need. If the initial report to the Safeguarding Lead is via telephone, the original copy of the CPIRF should be provided to the Safeguarding Lead within 24 hours of the report being made.
- If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice, StP will deal with it as a disciplinary/misconduct issue.
- If, following consideration, the allegation is about actual or potential abuse, the Safeguarding Lead will refer the allegation to the appropriate Social Services department who may involve the Police.
- The parents or carers of the child or vulnerable adult will be contacted as soon as possible following advice on whether or not it is appropriate to do so, from the social services department.
- A decision will be made regarding possible suspension of the worker concerned (without prejudice) pending an investigation. Such decisions will be taken following advice from Social Services/Police.
- The StP Chief Executive will deal with any media enquiries – all such enquiries must be referred to the CEO. In the event of the CEO being the subject of the suspicion/allegation, or unavailable, the Safeguarding Lead/Trustee responsible for Safeguarding will liaise with the Chair of the Board of Trustees.
- If the Safeguarding Lead/Trustee responsible for Safeguarding is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, or unavailable, the report must be made to the StP Chief Executive who will refer the allegation to Social Services. In such cases, the original copy of the CPIRF should be provided to the StP Chief Executive within 24 hours of the report being made.
- Where there is a complaint against a member of staff there may be three types of investigation:
 - A criminal investigation (Police)
 - A child protection investigation (Social Services/Police)
 - A disciplinary or misconduct investigation (StP/NGB)

The results of a Police and/or Child Protection investigation may influence the disciplinary investigation, but not necessarily.

All media enquiries relating to allegations of poor practice should be directed to the CEO of the Foundation. Under no circumstances is any other individual within StP able to make comments on enquiries relating to allegations of poor practice.

Reporting concerns about the behaviour of a member of staff, coach or volunteer of StP





12 Whistleblowing

Everyone within StP is encouraged to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible in the knowledge that their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated as appropriate and that their confidentiality will be respected. This applies to all employees, partners, contractors, sub-contractors, agency staff, consultants and work experience students/interns.

Whistleblowing is the disclosure of information which relates to suspected wrongdoing (generally a breach of a legal, statutory or regulatory requirement or unethical, immoral behaviour. This could include:

- Breach of a legal requirement.
- General malpractice.
- Breach of the Safeguarding policy.

If anyone has any genuine concerns relating to the above, you should report it under this policy. If there is any uncertainty, all queries should be directed to the Safeguarding Lead. Should the Safeguarding Lead be the subject of the whistleblowing, matters should be raised with the StP CEO.

Further guidance on whistleblowing can be found at:
<https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing/who-to-tell-what-to-expect>



13 Useful contacts

Switch the Play Foundation
Westminster House
10 Westminster Road
Macclesfield
Cheshire
SK10 1BX

Safeguarding Lead – Luke Jennings (07826 335750)
Trustee responsible for Safeguarding: Elizabeth Allen (07860 598342)
Chief Executive Officer – Leon Lloyd (07801 479008)

National Agencies

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline - 0808 800 5000
Childline – 0800 1111
Child Protection in Sport Unit – 0116 234 7278, www.thecpsu.org.uk
Police – 101 or 999 in an emergency