

SECTION 3: RECOGNISING, RESPONDING AND REPORTING

3.1 RECOGNISING POOR PRACTICE AND ABUSE

What is Abuse?

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a young person. Somebody may abuse or neglect a young person by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Young people may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another young person or persons.

Main Forms of Abuse:

There are five recognised forms of abuse. These are defined in HM Government Guidance: Working Together to Safeguard Children (2013):

1. Neglect

Neglect occurs where adults fail to meet young people's basic physical and psychological needs, like the need for food or warm clothing, or where adults fail or refuse to give a young person love, affection and attention. Young people might also be constantly left alone or unsupervised.

Neglect in volleyball could include a teacher or coach not ensuring participants are safe, exposing them to extremes of temperature or to unnecessary risk of injury.

2. Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a young person.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a young person.

In a volleyball situation, physical abuse might occur when the nature and intensity of training exceeds the capacity of the young person's immature and growing body or a young person is overplayed or fatigued.

3. Sexual Abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the young person is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving young people in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging young people to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a young person in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other young people.

In volleyball an adult could use the context of a training session to touch young people inappropriately. The power of the coach, team manager or official over young performers could, if misused, also lead to abusive situations developing.



4. Emotional Abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a young person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the person's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a young person that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the young person opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on young people. These may include interactions that are beyond a person's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the young person participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing young people to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of young people. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a person, though it may occur alone.

In volleyball, emotional abuse might occur if a young person is subjected to constant criticism or unrealistic pressure to perform consistently to high or unrealistic standards.

5. Bullying

The use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Young people could be bullied by adults or by other young people. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

In volleyball bullying might occur if a young person is deliberately excluded from activities, unreasonably forced to do things they do not want to do or negative personal comments are posted on social media sites.

Any kind of abuse, harassment or criticism based on racial/ethnic origins, sexual orientation or gender bias which amounts to racial, sexual or homophobic discrimination can also amount to emotional abuse. Bullying of a young person, perpetrated either by other young people or by an adult with the care or supervision of the young person, can also amount to emotional abuse.

Abuse of any sort can be perpetrated not only by adults, but may also be caused by other young people.

Indications of Abuse

Abuse in all its forms can affect a young person at any age. The effects can be so damaging that if untreated, may follow an individual into adulthood.

Recognising abuse is not always easy – even for experts. The examples listed below are not a complete list and they are only intended to indicate behavioural signs in young people which may suggest abuse. They do not in any way confirm that abuse has occurred:

- The young person says that he or she is being abused, or another person says they believe (or actually know) that abuse is occurring.
- The young person has an injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent.
- He or she has unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to injury.
- The young person's behaviour changes, either over time or quite suddenly, and he or she becomes quiet and withdrawn, or alternatively becomes aggressive.
- The young person appears not to trust adults, e.g. a parent or coach with whom he or she would be expected to have, or once had, a close relationship.



- He or she is prevented from socialising with other young people or does not seem able to make friends.
- He or she becomes increasingly neglected-looking in appearance, or loses or puts on weight for no apparent reason.
- The young person shows inappropriate sexual awareness or language for his/her age and sometimes behaves in a sexually explicit way.

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

What is Poor Practice?

Poor practice is behaviour which contravenes the Safeguarding and Protecting Young People Policies, Procedures and Good Practice Guidance. Such behaviour could be intentional or accidental.

This includes behaviour which contravenes:

- Volleyball England Codes of Conduct
- Volleyball England Equity Policy
- Volleyball England Anti-Bullying Policy
- Safeguarding & Protecting Young People Policy

Poor Practice in Volleyball

Example 1:

Two coaches run a training session for 26 young people of 12-14 years old. Good Practice Guidance states that for participants over 8 years old there should be one adult to every twelve young people (with a minimum of two adults). As such there should be three supervising adults for a group of 26 young people.

Example 2:

A young person aged 14 years old missed a training session due to illness. After the session the coach sends a text message directly to the young person enquiring whether they would be attending the next session. Good Practice Guidance states that young people should only be contacted when necessary and that parents/carers should be copied in to all communication.

3.2 RESPONDING TO CONCERNS

What should you do if you are concerned?

Concerns can come from a variety of sources; a direct disclosure is the least likely of these. If you are concerned about a young person, an individual's behaviour towards a young person or a young person indicates that they have been abused, or you obtain information which gives you

concern, you should:

- React calmly so as not to frighten the young person.
- Reassure the young person that he or she is not to blame and that it was right to tell.
- Take the report seriously, recognising the difficulties inherent in interpreting what is said.
- Keep questions to the absolute minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding. Only ask questions if you need to – do not ask the young person about explicit details.
- Reassure them but do not make promises of confidentiality which might not be possible to keep in the light of subsequent developments.

Volleyball England will fully support anyone who, in good faith and where he/she has reasonable grounds for doing so, reports his or her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a young person, even if that concern is proved to be unfounded.

- Make a full record of what has been said, heard and/or seen as soon as possible and fill out a Volleyball England Safeguarding Incident Referral Form (SIRF) (Section 4.1). This form is available from:

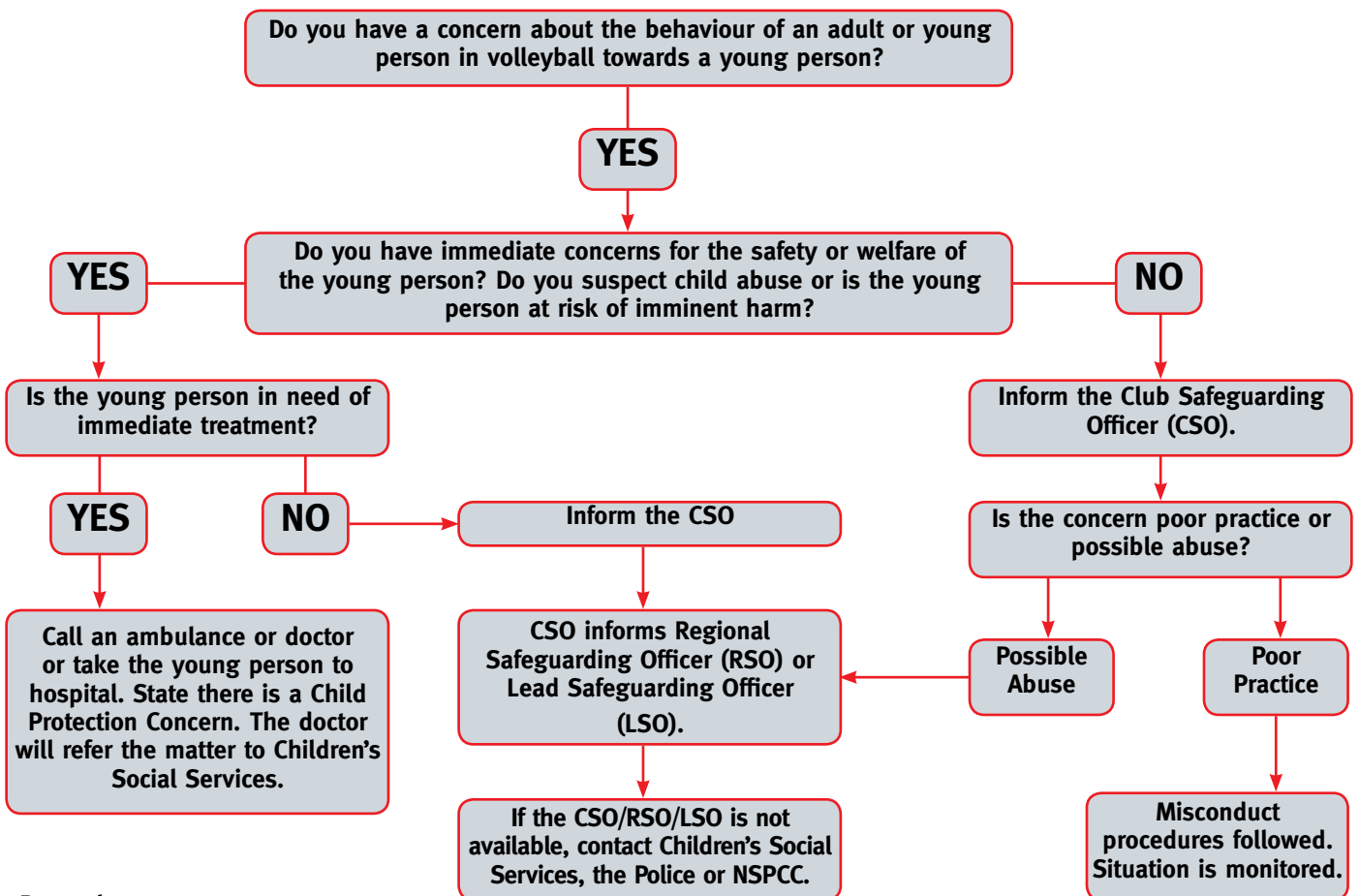
- Section 4.1 of this publication.

- The Club, Regional or Lead Safeguarding Officer.
- www.volleyballengland.org/safeguarding.
- Explain to the young person what will be done next and with whom the information will need to be shared.
- Pass the information, without delay, on to the appropriate person in accordance with the Safeguarding Incident Reporting Procedure.
- **REMEMBER:** it is not your responsibility to decide if the young person is being abused or poor practice has occurred. It is your responsibility to report your concerns.

Volleyball England has clear reporting procedures for reporting concerns. It is important that these are followed if you have any concerns surrounding poor practice, abuse or bullying. In some circumstances it may be most appropriate for the matter to be handled at a local level if, for example, the matter relates to minor poor practice or bullying. However, it is not your responsibility to decide if this is appropriate. Suitable guidance will be given by the Club, Regional, Volleyball England National or Lead Safeguarding Officer.

- **Where there is a concern of possible abuse there should be no undue delay in contacting statutory agencies.**

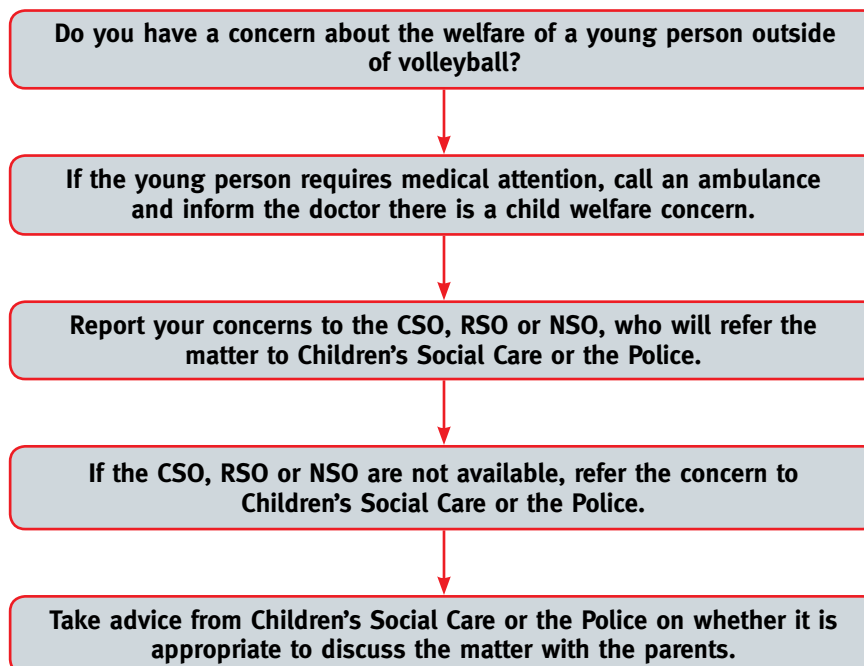
REPORTING CONCERNS OF POSSIBLE ABUSE WITHIN VOLLEYBALL



Remember:

- Be calm, reassure the young person. Be honest, do not make promises you cannot keep. Keep questions to a minimum.
- Take notes so that you can fill in the relevant paperwork.
- It is not your responsibility to decide or investigate if abuse has occurred.
- It is your responsibility to take action, however slight your concern.
- Make a factual record of the events, using the Volleyball England Safeguarding Referral Form. Forward a copy of the form including any action taken or additional information to the Club Safeguarding Officer or Regional Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible.

REPORTING CONCERNS OF POSSIBLE ABUSE OUTSIDE VOLLEYBALL



Remember:

- Be calm, reassure the young person. Be honest, do not make promises you cannot keep. Keep questions to a minimum.
- Take notes so that you can fill in the relevant paperwork.
- It is not your responsibility to decide or investigate if abuse has occurred.
- It is your responsibility to take action, however slight your concern.
- Make a factual record of the events, using the Volleyball England Safeguarding Referral Form. Forward a copy of the form including any action taken or additional information to the Club Safeguarding Officer or Regional Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible.

3.3 REPORTING AN INCIDENT

The Safeguarding Incident Reporting Procedure is to be followed if:

- There has been an allegation of abuse made by any person concerning any young person who is under the control, custody or supervision of Volleyball England, its employees or volunteers.
- Any member of Volleyball England staff, volunteer or accredited person has had any concerns made known to them about any young person.
- Any incident that could be deemed as abuse has occurred.

What YOU should do:

1. Ensure the young person is safe and receiving any necessary medical attention and is able to talk about their concerns, if they wish.
2. Report the incident to the Club Safeguarding Officer (CSO). If your club does not have a CSO, the report must be made to the Regional Safeguarding Officer (RSO).
3. Fill in the Volleyball England SIRF, giving full details of what occurred.

What the Club Safeguarding Officer should do:

Immediately contact the Regional or National Safeguarding Officer and report the incident and actions.

Where the Regional or Lead Safeguarding Officer is unavailable or where contacting them may cause undue delay contact the Police and/or Children's Social Services.

Any information passed on to Children's Social Care or the Police must be as helpful as possible, it will be necessary to make a detailed record of the following:

- The nature of the allegation.
- A description of the indicators of abuse.
- The account of the young person, if it can be given, of what happened to them.
- Any times, dates or other relevant information.
- A clear distinction between what is fact and what is hearsay.

When a referral is made to Children's Social Care or the police a written report should be sent within 24 hours. A record should be kept of the name, title and contact number of the Children's Social Care member or Police Officer to which the concerns were passed, together with the date and time of the call, in case any follow up is needed.

3.4 INFORMATION SHARING AND CONFIDENTIALITY

There has been confusion and uncertainty on the part of many professionals and volunteers working with young people about when, how and with whom concerns about the welfare of young people may be shared. Remember, the welfare of the young person is paramount.

Every effort must be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained when an allegation has been made and is being investigated. Information must be shared on a need to know basis and only with those who can help to manage the concern. This includes sharing the information with the Safeguarding Officer, the Police and Children's Social Care and relevant people within the Volleyball England. If the

matter is one concerning an allegation of abuse, the Police and/or Children's Social Care will take the lead in advising if others (including parents) can be informed. Remember there is a difference between information sharing and gossip. The latter should be avoided at all costs and could be unlawful according to the Data Protection Act and Human Rights Act.

Confidentiality is essential to ensure the safety of the young person and that any individuals involved are treated fairly, without prejudice or pre-judgment. Moreover it will ensure that the systems in place can work quickly and efficiently to manage any situation.

Further advice and guidance on information sharing is available on www.thecpsu.org.uk or www.gov.uk/dfc.

3.5 OFFICIAL REPORTING BODIES

The Local Safeguarding Children Board

Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) replaced Area Child Protection Committees (ACPCs) in April 2006 and have been set up to co-ordinate local work to safeguard and promote the welfare of young people and to ensure the effectiveness of that work.

For our purposes the key agencies involved within the LSCB are:

- Children's Social Care
- The Local Police
- The Education Department
- The Health Services (Hospitals and GPs)

Children's Social Care and the Police receive referrals relating to welfare and protection concerns, the Education Department often works in partnership with sports through school-club links and the Health Services will treat young people where their health has been impaired.

It is important that local clubs and Safeguarding Officers are familiar with the contact/referral details within their LSCB and know which local inter-agency procedures they are working to. The local authority Children's Social Care will be pleased to advise and provide contacts.

Some LSCBs have been developing 'Safeguarding through Sport' sub-groups managed by the local authority and with representation across the sports and recreation sector.



Regional Safeguarding Officers should be aware of these arrangements and mechanisms for communication with them.

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADOs)

Local Authority Designated Officers (LADOs) were established as a result of HM Government Guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2013). The role of a LADO is to support organisations, often towards the conclusion of a case, to ensure that internal complaints, investigations and disciplinary processes are effectively applied. The LADO becomes involved in cases involving potential abuse of trust. The way this happens will vary from case to case.

Club and Regional Safeguarding Officers should keep up-to-date contact details and information on how to make referrals to the LADOs in their area. A list of current LADOs can be found on the Child Protection in Sport Unit's (CPSU) website: www.thecpsu.org.uk.

Volleyball England Case Management Team (CMT)

Purpose:

1. To make decisions on the initial approach to all reported cases related to the safeguarding and protection of young people. Principally these relate to the 'route' a case will take internally and/or via external referral to statutory agencies but may also include making decisions in relation to concerns arising from information gathered through the recruitment process.
2. To make initial decisions as to what level each case will be dealt with, e.g. minor poor practice which may be referred back to a club's complaints/disciplinary procedures with advice, or suspected abuse of a young person, which requires dealing with at national level through disciplinary procedures.
3. To advise others within the organisation about actions they may need to take, such as initiating disciplinary proceedings.
4. To monitor and review progress on all cases and to identify any trends emerging which may require a review/revision of existing policies/procedures.

Principles:

- Independence

It is essential that the group is empowered by the organisation to make decisions on the 'route' that cases will take without influence or prejudice by others in the organisation.

- Confidentiality

All safeguarding and protection matters must be regarded as highly confidential and not for disclosure outside the group unless so agreed, on a strictly need to know basis, in line with the Data Protection Act and Human Rights Act.

- Expertise

The group should be led by the organisation's Lead Safeguarding Officer. The group should include people who have relevant knowledge and expertise to enable the group to fulfil its purpose such as HR/Personnel Manager/Clerk to Disciplinary Panel etc. It is recommended that at least one member of the group is external to the organisation's management group and has current professional safeguarding knowledge and experience.

- Equity and Anti-Discriminatory Practice

All decisions made by the group need to be fair, open and transparent. An open mind needs to be kept in all cases



until they have been investigated and concluded. The group should be guided by the organisation's equity policy and the principle that all young people have the right to protection from abuse regardless of their age, ability or disability, gender, racial origin, religious belief, social status or sexual orientation.

- The Welfare of the Young Person is Paramount

This principle is enshrined in the Children Act 2004. In any decision taken by the group, the welfare of the young person is the paramount concern and takes precedence over those of any adult where there is a perceived conflict of interest.

The CMT Is To Comprise At Least Three Of The Following:

- Volleyball England Solicitor (If appropriate).
- Chief Executive (If appropriate).
- Club Safeguarding Officer (If available).
- Regional Safeguarding Officer.
- Lead or National Safeguarding Officer.
- Person with expertise in the field of abuse to which the incident may relate (e.g. Children's Social Care or Police).
- President of Coaches and/or Performance Commission (If appropriate).

For further information regarding the CMT and its role please contact the national office.

3.6 WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY

It is important that any concerns regarding the behaviour of an adult towards a young person are shared with a Volleyball England Club, Regional or National Safeguarding Officer. All concerns will be taken seriously and managed according to Volleyball England's Safeguarding & Protecting Young People Policy.

All information received and discussed will be treated in confidence and only shared with those individuals who will be able to manage and resolve the situation in accordance with Volleyball England's Information Sharing Guidance.

Individuals can raise a matter of concern without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage. This policy is intended to encourage and enable individuals to raise serious concerns within Volleyball England and blow the whistle, rather than overlook the concern.

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

Whistleblower Reporting Procedure

Volleyball England recognises that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make for many reasons, including fear of reprisal from those implicated in the concern. If an individual believes what they are saying to be true, they should have nothing to fear, because in reporting their concern they will be doing their duty to the young person concerned.

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

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

Confidentiality of the Whistleblower

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

Anonymous Allegations

Volleyball England encourages the whistleblower to put their name to the allegation. Concerns expressed anonymously are much less powerful and may not provide all the relevant information. However, all reports will be considered at the discretion of the Case Management Team based on the seriousness of the issues raised, the credibility of the concern and the likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources or factual records.

Unfounded Allegations

If an individual makes an allegation in good faith, but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against them. If however, it is established that they have made malicious or frivolous allegations, or for personal gain, disciplinary action may be taken against them. In such cases, Volleyball England's disciplinary procedures will apply.

Use of the Whistle Blowing Policy

The Whistle Blowing Policy should only be followed if the individual raising the concern feels unable to follow the standard reporting process outlined in Sections 3.2 and 3.3.

Individuals should raise the concern in the first instance with the Volleyball England Lead Safeguarding Officer by post to the national office, marked 'private and confidential' or via email to: safeguarding@volleyballengland.org

The individual should set out the background and history of the concern, giving names, dates and places where possible and the reason why they are particularly concerned about the situation. The earlier the concern is raised, the easier it is to take action.

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

If your concern is regarding the Lead Safeguarding Officer, you should refer the matter to the Volleyball England Chief Executive Officer.

If you do not want, or feel unable to report the concern to Volleyball England, a number of external agencies are available for reporting purposes:

- The Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU)
- Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB)
- Local Children's Social Care
- Local Police

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

In order to protect individuals it is likely that the Lead Safeguarding Officer will conduct initial enquiries so that the Case Management Team can decide on whether an investigation is appropriate and, if so, what form it should take. The amount of contact between the people considering the issues and the whistleblower will depend on the nature of the matters raised, the potential difficulties involved and the clarity of the information provided. If necessary, further information will be sought from the whistleblower as part of the investigation process.

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

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

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



