Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy 2026-27

Challenge Sport and Education Ltd, company number 08332038. Approved by Doug Berlin, owner. Next full review: August 2027.

1. Policy statement and scope

Challenge Sport and Education Ltd believes that every child has the right to be safe, and that the welfare of the child is paramount. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: everyone who works with us has a duty to recognise, respond to and report concerns about a child's safety or welfare.

We aim to:

- protect all children from abuse and harm, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, ethnic origin, religious belief or sexual orientation
- make sure every adult who works with us is safely recruited, trained and knows what to do if they are worried about a child
- respond quickly and appropriately to every concern, and work with parents, schools and local agencies to keep children safe
- provide safe activities and environments, supported by risk assessments
- support children who have been harmed, and learn from every concern

Scope. This policy applies to everyone who works for or on behalf of Challenge Sport and Education: employees, freelance coaches, volunteers, students on placement and anyone else working with children in our name. It covers all our services:

- PE lessons and after-school clubs delivered in partner schools
- breakfast clubs and after-school wraparound childcare
- holiday courses, including one setting registered with Ofsted, on the Early Years Register

In this policy, a "child" is anyone under 18.

Guidance we follow. This policy follows:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (KCSIE)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), for our early years provision
- the DfE guidance Keeping children safe during community activities, after-school clubs and tuition
- the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit Standards for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport
- the procedures of the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Barnet Safeguarding Children Partnership

2. Our safeguarding team

Role	Who	Contact
Owner, accountable for safeguarding	Doug Berlin	info@challengesporteducation.co.uk
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Doug Berlin	info@challengesporteducation.co.uk

Role	Who	Contact
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	A senior coach, trained to DSL level	See the safeguarding poster and staff contact card
Setting Safeguarding Manager	The childcare manager at each setting	On site; named on the safeguarding poster at each setting

The current names and contact details of the Deputy DSL and each Setting Safeguarding Manager are shown on the safeguarding poster at every setting, on staff contact cards and on our website.

The owner is accountable for safeguarding across the company. Doug Berlin makes sure this policy is in place, followed, resourced and reviewed, holds a safeguarding review with the Deputy DSL each term, and commissions an independent safeguarding review every year.

The DSL takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection. The DSL decides whether to refer a concern to children's social care or the police, liaises with schools and local agencies, keeps safeguarding records, and makes sure staff are trained. Doug Berlin is also the designated safeguarding lead for our early years provision under the EYFS.

The Deputy DSL is trained to the same level as the DSL and acts as DSL whenever the DSL is unavailable.

Setting Safeguarding Managers are the first point of contact for safeguarding at their setting. They make sure children are safe in the moment, record concerns and pass every concern to the DSL or Deputy the same day.

All staff follow this policy, report every concern straight away, and complete the safeguarding training we require.

Role descriptions are in the appendix.

On-call cover. An on-call rota makes sure the DSL or Deputy DSL can be reached during every session, holiday course and weekend.

If neither the DSL nor the Deputy can be reached:

1. If a child is in immediate danger, call 999.
2. The Setting Safeguarding Manager, or the most senior member of staff on site, makes sure the child is safe and records the concern.
3. If a child may be at risk of significant harm, they contact children's social care directly (see Key contacts). They do not wait.
4. They keep trying the DSL and Deputy, and tell them as soon as they make contact.

3. Recognising abuse

All staff should be alert to the signs that a child may be at risk. A child may tell someone, or there may be signs such as unexplained injuries, changes in behaviour, poor hygiene, hunger or fear of going home. Staff should never assume someone else will report it.

The four types of abuse

- **Physical abuse:** hitting, shaking, throwing, burning, poisoning or otherwise causing physical harm.
- **Emotional abuse:** persistent emotional ill-treatment, such as making a child feel worthless, frightened or unloved, or exposing them to domestic abuse.
- **Sexual abuse:** forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, including online, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.
- **Neglect:** persistent failure to meet a child's basic needs, such as food, clothing, shelter, supervision, medical care or emotional needs.

Specific safeguarding issues staff should be aware of include:

- child-on-child abuse, including bullying, physical abuse, sexual harassment and sharing nude or semi-nude images
- online abuse and grooming
- child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation, including county lines
- domestic abuse at home
- radicalisation and extremism (the Prevent duty)
- female genital mutilation (FGM). Any sign or disclosure of FGM must be reported to the DSL immediately; the DSL will report it to the police
- children missing from education or care
- mental health concerns and self-harm
- children with special educational needs or disabilities, who can face extra barriers to being recognised and heard

Staff do not need to be certain that abuse is happening. If they are worried, they report it.

4. Responding to a concern about a child

If a child is in immediate danger, call 999 first.

If a child tells you something (a disclosure):

1. Stay calm, listen and take what they say seriously.
2. Let them talk. Don't ask leading questions; only ask open questions such as "Tell me more" if you need to understand.
3. Don't promise to keep it secret. Explain that you need to tell someone who can help.
4. Reassure them they have done the right thing by telling you.
5. Don't confront anyone the child has named, or investigate yourself.

Reporting. Tell the Setting Safeguarding Manager, the DSL or the Deputy DSL straight away, and always on the same day. On a school site, also follow the school's procedure (see section 9). If you are not happy with the response, or the child remains at risk, you can contact children's social care directly. Anyone can make a referral.

Recording. As soon as possible, and the same day, write down on the Safeguarding Concern Form:

- the date, time and place
- what you saw or heard, using the child's own words
- any injuries, marked on a body map (never photograph injuries)
- what you said and did, and who you told
- your name, role and signature

Record facts, not opinions. Give the record to the DSL. Don't keep copies.

What the DSL does. The DSL decides on the next step, usually within one working day:

- refer to children's social care (Hertfordshire or Barnet, depending on where the child lives) if the child may be at risk of significant harm
- contact the police if a crime may have been committed
- share the concern with the child's school DSL where appropriate
- seek advice, or suggest early help support for the family
- keep monitoring and record the decision and reasons

The DSL normally speaks to parents before making a referral, unless doing so could put the child at greater risk. If the DSL is unhappy with a response from children's social care, they will use the local escalation procedure.

Records and information sharing. Safeguarding records are kept separately from other records, stored securely (locked or password-protected), and seen only by those who need them. Information is shared with schools and agencies on a need-to-know basis to keep children safe; data protection law does not prevent this. Records are kept in line with our retention schedule. If a child with a safeguarding record moves to another school, setting or club that has a safeguarding lead, the DSL shares the relevant information with that DSL securely and promptly, and records what was sent, to whom and when.

Support after a disclosure. Hearing a disclosure can be upsetting. The DSL or Setting Safeguarding Manager offers the member of staff a debrief or wellbeing check-in within 2 working days, and records on the concern form that it was offered. The DSL can get confidential advice and support from the NSPCC Helpline or the local authority's safeguarding team.

5. Allegations against staff, low-level concerns and whistleblowing

Allegations that someone who works with us may have harmed a child are **not** handled through our complaints procedure. They follow this section.

When this section applies. It applies when anyone working for us (employee, freelancer, volunteer or student) may have:

1. behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
2. possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
3. behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children
4. behaved, or may have behaved, in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children, including behaviour outside work

What to do

1. Report the allegation to the DSL immediately. If the allegation is about the DSL (Doug Berlin), report it directly to the LADO for the area: Hertfordshire 01992 555420 or Barnet 020 8359 4528.
2. The DSL contacts the LADO within one working day, before taking any other action. The DSL does not investigate, interview the people involved or tell the person the allegation is about until the LADO has advised.
3. The DSL follows the LADO's advice, including on whether to inform the police or children's social care, risk-assess the person's work, or suspend them while enquiries take place. Suspension is not automatic and is a neutral act.
4. For our Ofsted-registered provision, the DSL tells Ofsted about any allegation of harm against someone working with children, as soon as reasonably practicable and within 14 days.
5. If someone is dismissed or removed from working with children because they harmed, or posed a risk of harm to, a child (or would have been, had they not resigned), we have a legal duty to refer them to the Disclosure and Barring Service.
6. All allegations, actions and outcomes are recorded and kept securely.

Low-level concerns. A low-level concern is behaviour by an adult that does not meet the threshold above but is not in line with our Staff Code of Conduct. Examples include being over-friendly with a child, having favourites, taking photos on a personal phone, or using inappropriate language. Report these to the DSL. The DSL records them, deals with them, and looks for patterns. Staff are also encouraged to self-report if they find themselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted.

Complaints. Concerns about the quality of our service, which are not about a child's safety, follow our Complaints Procedure.

Whistleblowing. Anyone who is worried about poor or unsafe practice in our organisation should raise it with the DSL or the owner. If they don't feel able to, or feel their concern has not been dealt with, they can

contact the LADO, Ofsted (0300 123 1231) or the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line (0800 028 0285). We will not treat anyone unfairly for raising a concern in good faith.

6. Safer recruitment and suitability

We follow safer recruitment practice for every role that involves working with children, and complete our Safer Recruitment checklist for each person before they start.

Recruitment

- Job adverts include our commitment to safeguarding and state that the role is subject to an enhanced DBS check and references.
- Shortlisted candidates receive the full job description, including safeguarding responsibilities, and are told that we carry out online searches as part of due diligence. The search is recorded and signed off by the DSL.
- Every candidate completes an application form. Gaps in employment are explored.
- The DSL interviews every candidate and makes the final decision on every appointment. Interviews include safeguarding questions, and the answers are recorded.
- At an interview or trial day, a candidate without our checks is never left unsupervised with children and always works alongside a member of our staff.

Checks before anyone starts

- an enhanced DBS check with a children's barred list check, received before they start. This applies to employees, freelancers, volunteers and young leaders aged 16 to 17
- two satisfactory written references, one from the most recent employer (or school or college for under-18s)
- proof of identity (checked at the DBS application) and right to work in the UK (a dated copy is kept)
- relevant qualifications, verified from the originals
- overseas criminal record checks for anyone who has lived or worked outside the UK for 3 months or more in the last 5 years
- a signed Staff Self-Declaration covering criminal records and childcare disqualification, re-signed every January

All checks are recorded on our single central record. DBS checks are kept up to date: anyone registered with the DBS Update Service has an online status check every 12 months, and everyone else has a new enhanced DBS check every 3 years. The DSL checks renewal dates every term.

Students on work experience are not DBS checked by us. They have a risk assessment and health and safety induction before starting, and are never left alone with children or counted in ratios.

Induction. Every new starter has an induction covering this policy, the Staff Code of Conduct, KCSIE Part 1 (or Annex A), our safeguarding team and how to report a concern. They sign to confirm they have read and will follow these before working with children.

Change of circumstances. Anyone working with children must tell the DSL before their next working day about anything that could affect their suitability to work with children. This includes being arrested, charged, cautioned or convicted, a change of address, or changes to the people they live with, including criminal convictions of household members. For our Ofsted-registered provision, the DSL notifies Ofsted where required. If someone becomes disqualified from working with children, they will be removed from that work and the matter will be handled under our disciplinary procedure.

7. Safeguarding training

Who	Training	Renewal
All staff, freelancers and volunteers	Safeguarding children training (at least Level 1) and Prevent awareness, before working unsupervised	Every 2 years, plus at least one update a year (for example, a briefing before each holiday course)
Setting Safeguarding Managers	Advanced Safeguarding Children (Level 2)	Every 2 years
DSL and Deputy DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead (Level 3), plus sport-specific DSL training	Every 2 years, with updates at least once a year
Anyone involved in recruitment	Safer recruitment training	Every 2 years
First aid	First aid for coaches. Whenever children under 5 are present, at least one member of staff with a full paediatric first aid certificate is on site	As the certificate requires

In our early years provision, safeguarding training meets the EYFS requirements for early years practitioners.

All training is recorded for every member of staff, including the DSL, on our staff tracker (the same record as our single central record), which the DSL checks each term.

8. Safe working practice

Our Staff Code of Conduct sets out the expected behaviour in full. In summary, everyone working with us must:

- avoid unobserved one-to-one contact with a child. If it can't be avoided, stay in sight of others and tell a colleague
- use physical contact only when it is needed to coach a skill, keep a child safe or give first aid, and explain what you are doing first
- follow the agreed arrangements for supervising toilets and changing areas
- never contact children privately by phone, text, messaging apps or social media, or accept them as friends or followers
- never give gifts or favours to individual children
- never transport children in their own vehicle unless it is agreed in writing in advance with the DSL and parents
- understand that a sexual relationship with a 16- or 17-year-old they coach is a criminal offence (abuse of a position of trust)

Mobile phones and cameras. On holiday courses and in childcare settings, staff keep personal phones out of children's areas. One lead person per venue keeps their phone on them, used only for contact with head office about:

1. the status of a child being collected
2. late bookings and changes
3. first aid and emergencies
4. reporting final register numbers

Personal phones are never used to take photos or videos of children.

Photographs and video. We only take photos or video of children whose parents have given consent at booking, and only on company devices. Images are stored securely and never published with a child's full name. Staff check the register for children without photo consent before any photos are taken.

Online safety. Any online contact, such as remote coaching or group messages, goes through parents and never directly to children. Any company device children use has content filtering. Concerns about online abuse are reported to the DSL like any other concern.

9. Day-to-day procedures

Registers and ratios. Staff take a register when children arrive and leave, carry out headcounts at every change of activity, and keep to the required staff-to-child ratios. Our usual ratios are one coach to a class of up to 30 for PE lessons, with school staff available if needed, and one member of staff to 10 children in childcare (one to 8 at many venues). We increase staffing where children's individual needs require it, and always meet the EYFS requirements for children in our early years provision.

Collection. At holiday courses, parents fill in a form at drop-off with a password and the name of the person collecting. For after-school clubs, parents give a password, which is passed to the lead coach. We only release a child to an authorised adult who gives the correct password. If the password is wrong or unknown, the child stays with us while further checks are made. Parents are asked to write passwords down rather than say them aloud.

If staff believe a child would be put at risk by leaving with the adult collecting them (for example, the adult appears intoxicated), they keep the child safe, tell the DSL immediately and, if needed, contact children's social care or the police.

Late or uncollected child. If a child is not collected on time, staff call the parents and then the emergency contacts. Two members of staff stay with the child. If no one can be reached within 15 minutes of the end of the session, staff contact the DSL. If the child has still not been collected and no parent or emergency contact can be reached within 30 minutes of the end of the session, the DSL contacts children's social care.

Missing child. If a child cannot be found, staff raise the alarm straight away, check the register, secure the exits and search the site. The lead contacts the DSL and the parents. If the child is not found within 10 minutes, call 999. The DSL records the incident and, for our Ofsted-registered provision, notifies Ofsted.

First aid and medical incidents

- *Minor injuries:* first aid is given and recorded on Pebble or, at some venues, in the incident book (where, when, what happened, who treated). Parents sign the form and can take a copy.
- *Head injuries:* as for minor injuries, and parents are phoned. If we believe the child needs to be collected, we will say so. We advise parents to monitor the child and to go to A&E if unsure.
- *Serious injuries:* call an ambulance if needed, give first aid, phone the parents and record the incident. Report to RIDDOR where required, and to Ofsted for our registered provision where required.

Medicines. We only give medicine with prior written consent from a parent, in its original container, labelled with the child's name and dose. A second member of staff witnesses each dose, and we record when it was given, how much and by whom. Parents are told the same day. Children's allergy and care plans are shared with the staff working with them.

Intimate care. We do not provide nappy changing or toilet training. If a child needs help after a toileting accident, such as changing into spare clothes, staff encourage the child to do as much as they can themselves, respect their dignity, tell another member of staff, record it and tell the parent at collection.

Children with SEND or extra needs. We ask about special educational needs, disabilities and medical needs at booking and agree a plan with parents where needed. Staff know these children may find it harder to communicate concerns.

Working on school sites. When working in a school, staff sign in, wear ID, follow the school's safeguarding procedures and know who the school's DSL is. A concern about a pupil is reported to our DSL and the school's DSL the same day.

10. Monitoring and review

- The owner and Deputy DSL review safeguarding every term: concerns, training, recruitment checks and our safeguarding action plan.
- An independent safeguarding review takes place every year, followed by an annual safeguarding report.
- This policy is reviewed every year in August, when KCSIE is updated, and whenever the law, guidance or our services change.
- The policy is published on our website, shared with partner schools and parents, and signed by every member of staff.

Related policies and procedures: Staff Code of Conduct; Complaints Procedure; Whistleblowing Procedure; Grievance Procedure; Safer Recruitment checklist; Photography and Social Media Policy; Data Protection and Privacy Notice; Health and Safety Policy.

11. Key contacts

Who	When to use	Number
Emergency services	A child is in immediate danger	999
Doug Berlin, DSL	Any concern about a child or an adult	info@challengesporteducation.co.uk
Deputy DSL	When the DSL is unavailable	See the safeguarding poster and staff contact card
Hertfordshire Children's Services	Referral for children living in Hertfordshire (day and out of hours)	0300 123 4043
Barnet MASH	Referral for children living in Barnet	020 8359 4066, out of hours 020 8359 2000
Harrow Children's Access Team	Referral for children living in Harrow	020 8901 2690 (9am to 5pm), out of hours 020 8424 0999
Harrow LADO	Allegations about adults working with children in Harrow	020 8901 2690 (out of hours 020 8424 0999)
Hertfordshire LADO	Allegations against staff, Hertfordshire	01992 555420
Barnet LADO	Allegations against staff, Barnet	020 8359 4528
Ofsted	Notifications; concerns about our registered provision	0300 123 1231
Police (non-emergency)	Crimes that are not urgent, including FGM	101
DfE counter-extremism helpline	Concerns about radicalisation	020 7340 7264
NSPCC Helpline	Advice for adults worried about a child	0808 800 5000
NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line	Staff concerns about unsafe practice	0800 028 0285
Childline	For children and young people	0800 1111

For children who live in another area, contact children's social care for the area where they live.

Appendix: role descriptions

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Doug Berlin

The DSL has the time, authority and resources to lead safeguarding across Challenge Sport and Education. The DSL:

- takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, including online safety

- receives every safeguarding concern and decides on the next step, including referrals to children's social care, the police and the LADO
- notifies Ofsted where required for our registered provision
- keeps secure, accurate safeguarding records
- liaises with partner schools, local safeguarding partnerships and parents
- makes sure all staff are trained, keeps the staff tracker up to date, and briefs staff on changes
- keeps this policy up to date and makes sure staff, parents and schools know who the safeguarding team is
- is the designated safeguarding lead for our early years provision under the EYFS
- completes DSL Level 3 training every 2 years, with updates at least once a year

Signed: Doug Berlin Date: 30.10.26

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Deputy DSL supports the DSL and acts as DSL whenever the DSL is unavailable. The Deputy:

- is on the on-call rota so a DSL is always reachable
- carries out all the DSL's duties when acting as DSL, and briefs the DSL afterwards
- joins the DSL for the termly safeguarding review
- completes DSL Level 3 training every 2 years, with updates at least once a year

Setting Safeguarding Manager

The Setting Safeguarding Manager is the first point of contact for safeguarding at their setting. They:

- are the person staff, children and parents at the setting speak to first about a concern
- make sure a child is safe in the moment, and call 999 if a child is in immediate danger
- make sure concerns are recorded and passed to the DSL or Deputy the same day
- follow the plan in section 2 if neither the DSL nor the Deputy can be reached
- make sure registers, ratios, collection and missing child procedures are followed at their setting
- make sure the safeguarding poster is displayed and staff have their contact cards
- complete Advanced Safeguarding Children (Level 2) training every 2 years