ENGLAND HOCKEY

Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy

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1 Policy Statement

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

1.2 Everyone participating in hockey, regardless of age has the right to take part in a safe, welcoming and enjoyable environment, free from abuse, harm and exploitation. This policy sets out EH specific safeguarding responsibilities towards Adults at Risk. Concerns about the welfare, conduct or behaviour of adult participants who do not meet that definition are addressed in EH's Code of Conduct, Poor Practice Guidance and Disciplinary Regulations, as set out at Section 3.

1.3 All Adults at Risk involved in hockey have the right to be safe, respected, included, empowered and appropriately supported. Adults at Risk have the right to participate in hockey in a safe and welcoming environment, where their voices are heard and their choices are respected.

1.4 EH recognises that safeguarding is a shared responsibility across hockey and that a person may meet the definition of an Adult at Risk at different points in their life. Care and support needs, exposure to abuse or neglect, and a person's ability to protect themselves may be affected by disability, illness, trauma, coercion or other life circumstances. The full definition in section 2 must always be considered.

1.5 EH acknowledges that some Adults at Risk, including deaf and disabled people and those from Black, Asian and minoritised ethnic communities, may face additional barriers to disclosure or to accessing support, and EH accepts the responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to identify and address those barriers to ensure their welfare.

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

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

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

1.9 This policy sits alongside the EH Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy to support a consistent and continuous approach to safeguarding and wellbeing as Children transition into adulthood.

2 Definition of Adults at Risk

2.1 For the purpose of this policy, an Adult at Risk is defined in line with the Care Act 2014 as a person aged 18 years or over who:

2.1.1 has needs for care and support (whether or not those needs are being met)

2.1.2 is experiencing, or is at risk of abuse or neglect

2.1.3 as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or experience of abuse or neglect.

2.2 The definition reflects safeguarding guidance provided by Ann Craft Trust and recognises that an adult may be considered at risk due to a range of factors, including physical or learning disabilities, mental health needs, long-term illness, age, or other circumstances that may affect their ability to protect themselves.

2.3 Being an Adult at Risk may be a temporary or permanent situation, and an individual's level of vulnerability may vary depending on their circumstances or environment.

2.4 Do not assume that a person is an Adult at Risk, or that they are unable to make a decision, solely because they are disabled, have a diagnosis, communicate differently, receive support, experience poor mental wellbeing or make a decision with which others disagree.

3 Scope & Application

3.1 From the Board to staff, EH places the safety of Adults at Risk at the heart of its culture and values. As the National Governing Body for hockey in England, EH is responsible for promoting a safe, welcoming and enjoyable environment for all Adults at Risk.

3.2 This policy applies to:

3.2.1 All EH Board and staff members

3.2.2 All Members and Connected Participants of EH

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

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

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

3.5 This policy should be read alongside:

3.5.1 EH Safeguarding Disciplinary Regulations

3.5.2 EH Safeguarding Reporting Procedures

3.5.3 EH Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy

3.5.4 EH Spirit of Hockey - Code of Conduct

3.5.5 EH Safe Recruitment Guidance

3.5.6 EH Good Practice Guidance Adults at Risk

3.5.7 EH Recognising Poor Practice Guidance Adults at Risk

3.5.8 EH Employee Handbook and Disciplinary Process (where applicable)

3.6 Athletes in Performance and Development Pathways:

3.6.1 This section applies only to adults formally selected onto an EH-recognised performance or talent pathway programme. It does not extend the definition of Adult at Risk in Section 2 and does not apply to adult participants generally.

3.6.2 EH recognises, in line with guidance from the Ann Craft Trust, that adults on these named programmes may experience situational vulnerability arising from the sporting environment itself, distinct from the statutory definition of an Adult at Risk in Section 2. This may include:

- feeling unable to challenge or raise concerns about a coach, medical staff member, or selector, because funding, selection, or career progression depends on that relationship;
- spending prolonged periods in close, isolated contact with someone in a Position of Trust, away from their usual support network of family and friends;
- being part of a culture that treats overtraining, playing through injury, or dismissing welfare concerns as normal.

3.6.3 Where such situational vulnerability does not meet the Care Act 2014 threshold in Section 2, concerns will be addressed through EH's Positions of Trust principle (4.1.4), Poor Practice Guidance, Spirit of Hockey Code of Conduct, and EH's Employee disciplinary processes where applicable, rather than through the formal Adult at Risk referral route.

3.6.4 Where situational vulnerability escalates such that an individual has, or develops, care and support needs and is unable to protect themselves as a result of those needs, they will be treated as an Adult at Risk under Section 2, and this policy's referral and reporting procedures will apply in full.

3.6.5 Athletes, athlete support personnel and EH officeholders on UK Sport-funded performance programmes may access Sport Integrity, the independent confidential reporting and investigation service delivered by Sport Resolutions. Sport Integrity does not replace EH's safeguarding responsibilities under this policy. Where Sport Integrity identifies a safeguarding concern, it will refer the matter to EH for action in accordance with this policy.

3.6.6 For the avoidance of doubt, general adult participants in club or recreational hockey who do not meet the Section 2 definition, and who are not on a programme named in 3.6.1, fall outside the scope of formal safeguarding referral under this policy. Concerns about conduct, welfare, or behaviour involving such participants are addressed through EH's Code of Conduct, Poor Practice Guidance, and Disciplinary Regulations, as applicable to any participant.

4 Safeguarding Principles

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

4.1.1 The welfare of Adults at Risk is paramount.

4.1.2 All Adults at Risk have the right to be safe, respected, included and heard.

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

4.1.4 Adults in Positions of Trust must maintain clear, professional boundaries and must not misuse their authority, influence or access.

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

4.1.6 Where an Adult at Risk has the mental capacity to make decisions about their own safety and wellbeing, their right to do so will be respected in line with the Mental Capacity Act 2005, save where wider risk to others, a criminal offence, or another legal obligation requires action regardless of the individual's wishes.

4.1.6.1 Mental capacity is decision-specific and may fluctuate. Adults at Risk must be provided with appropriate support to understand information and make their own decisions wherever possible. Where an individual lacks capacity to make a particular decision, any decision made on their behalf must be made in their best interests and in the least restrictive way available.

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

4.2 EH aligns with the six principles of the Care Act 2014.

4.2.1 Empowerment: supporting and encouraging people to make their own decisions and give informed consent.
4.2.2 Prevention: taking action before harm occurs wherever possible.
4.2.3 Proportionality: using the least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
4.2.4 Protection: providing support and representation for those in greatest need.
4.2.5 Partnership: working collaboratively with individuals, communities and statutory agencies to prevent, identify and respond to abuse and neglect.
4.2.6 Accountability: ensuring transparency and accountability in safeguarding practice.

5 Safeguarding Responsibilities & Assurance

5.1 EH will:

5.1.1 Reinforce the message that safeguarding is not optional and that everyone has responsibility to ensure Adults at Risk are safe in hockey.

5.1.2 Prioritise the welfare of Adults at Risk and ensure their voices inform decision-making.

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

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

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

5.1.6 Commit to share information about safeguarding and good practice via leaflets, posters, group work, forums and one-to-one discussions.

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

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

5.1.9 Refer matters to the Police or Adult Social Care when appropriate.

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

5.1.11 Ensure strategic safeguarding leadership, and work collaboratively with Sport England, UK Sport and the Ann Craft Trust.

5.1.12 Ensure all staff receive appropriate periodical safeguarding training.

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

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

5.2 Clubs and Associations will:

5.2.1 Adopt and promote the EH Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy.

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

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

5.2.4 Ensure that each role is assessed to determine the appropriate level of DBS check for which it is legally eligible:

5.2.4.1 Enhanced DBS check with Adults' Barred List check: where the role involves Regulated Activity with adults as defined by legislation.

5.2.4.2 Enhanced DBS check without an Adults' Barred List check: where the role meets the statutory eligibility requirements for an Enhanced DBS check but does not involve Regulated Activity with adults.

5.2.4.3 Standard DBS check: only where the role meets the relevant statutory eligibility criteria for a Standard check.

5.2.4.4 Basic DBS check: where the role is not eligible for a Standard or Enhanced check and a criminal record check is considered appropriate and proportionate as part of the safe recruitment process.

5.2.4.5 DBS eligibility must be determined by the activities and responsibilities of the specific role. EH's Safeguarding Team can provide guidance on the appropriate level of check.

5.2.5 Ensure that people undertaking relevant safeguarding, support or Position of Trust responsibilities complete the training specified by EH for their role. EH will maintain a training framework identifying required learning, target roles, approved interim arrangements and renewal periods.

5.2.6 Maintain safe, positive, welcoming and inclusive environments.

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

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

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

5.3.1 Comply with all EH safeguarding policies and procedures.

5.3.2 Promote a safe and welcoming environment.

5.3.3 Where working in a Position of Trust or undertaking Regulated Activity:

5.3.3.1 Complete EH safeguarding training appropriate to the role, renewed in accordance with EH requirements.

5.3.3.2 Hold the appropriate level and workforce of DBS check where the activities of the role meet the relevant eligibility criteria. Any EH requirement to renew or revalidate an eligible check on a three-year cycle is an organisational safeguarding requirement and does not determine legal eligibility for the original check.

5.3.4 Report safeguarding concerns immediately via EH Reporting Procedures.

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

6 Legal and Governance Framework

6.1 Statutory guidance takes precedence over this policy.

6.2 The relevant legislation includes:

6.2.1 Care Act 2014
6.2.2 Care and Support Statutory Guidance
6.2.3 Mental Capacity Act 2005
6.2.4 Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
6.2.5 Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
6.2.6 Domestic Abuse Act 2021
6.2.7 Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004
6.2.8 Serious Crime Act 2015
6.2.9 Modern Slavery Act 2015
6.2.10 Sexual Offences Act 2003
6.2.11 Equality Act 2010
6.2.12 Human Rights Act 1998
6.2.13 Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
6.2.14 Ann Craft Trust — Safeguarding Adults in Sport Framework
6.2.15 Police Act 1997
6.2.16 Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975

7 Information Sharing and Reporting

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

7.2 The EH Safeguarding Team provides confidential advice, guidance, and support to anyone raising or managing safeguarding concerns. Information will only be shared where lawful and necessary to protect Adults at Risk, in line with the *Data Protection Act 2018* and *UK GDPR*.

7.3 EH will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service where it is under a legal duty to do so, including where an individual has been removed from Regulated Activity, or would have been removed had they not otherwise ceased that activity, and the relevant statutory referral criteria are met. EH may also make a referral in other circumstances where it has a lawful power to do so. All referrals will be made promptly and in accordance with statutory requirements.

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

7.5 Where EH staff, volunteers or programmes are involved in activity at schools, colleges or universities, EH safeguarding procedures apply alongside each institutions own safeguarding framework. Concerns must be reported in accordance with EH Reporting Procedures.

7.6 EH requires all safeguarding concerns to be reported in accordance with this policy and the EH Safeguarding Reporting Procedures, irrespective of whether an individual statutory reporting duty applies in the particular circumstances. This is an EH safeguarding requirement. Failure to report a safeguarding concern in accordance with EH requirements may constitute a breach of this policy and may result in disciplinary action.

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

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Appendix

Definitions

Adult	Any person aged 18 or over.
Adults at Risk	any person aged 18 or over who has needs for care and support (whether or not those needs are being met), who is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and who, as a result of those care and support needs, is unable to protect themselves against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.
Adult Social Care	Local authority statutory services responsible for receiving referrals, assessing risk, and coordinating safeguarding actions for Adults at Risk.
Board / EH Board	The Board of Directors of England Hockey.
Child / Young Person	Anyone under 18 years of age, in accordance with UK law.
Children's Social Care / Services	Local authority statutory services responsible for receiving referrals, assessing risk, and coordinating safeguarding actions for Children.
Club	A hockey organisation which is a Member of England Hockey, through which players, coaches, officials, and volunteers participate.
Connected Participant	Any individual participating in hockey activity under England Hockey's jurisdiction, including players, coaches, umpires, officials, staff, volunteers, contractors, parents/carers, and delivery partners.
DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service)	The government body responsible for criminal records checks and managing barred lists for people working or volunteering with Children and/or Adults at Risk.
England Hockey	The National Governing Body (NGB) for the sport of hockey in England.
EH Safeguarding Disciplinary Regulations	England Hockey procedures that govern the investigation and management of safeguarding-related conduct concerns.
EH Disciplinary Regulations	England Hockey procedures that govern the investigation and management of red cards and misconduct complaints.

EH Employee Handbook	England Hockey procedures that govern the employment of individuals within the Governing Body, including disciplinary procedures.
EH Safeguarding Team	England Hockey staff responsible for safeguarding case management, advice, referrals, and implementation of safeguarding policies and regulations.
Enhanced DBS Check	A criminal record check that includes police information and, where relevant, barred list information, required for individuals in regulated or supervisory roles with Children and/or Adults at Risk.
LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)	A statutory officer responsible for managing and overseeing allegations against adults working or volunteering with Children.
Member / Membership	Any individual, association, club, or organisation formally admitted to membership of England Hockey in accordance with its articles and membership rules.
Non-Member	Any individual, association, club, or organisation involved in hockey activity who is not a Member of EH or any EH Member body.
Parent / Carer	A person with parental responsibility or day-to-day care or support to a Child or Adult at Risk.
Position of Trust	A role in which an Adult has authority, supervision, or responsibility over another person, whether a Child / Young Person or Adult at Risk. This includes coaches, officials, welfare officers, and others in positions of influence within the sport. Abuse of a Position of Trust may constitute a criminal offence.
Regulated Activity	Specific roles or activities defined in law that involve close and unsupervised contact with Children and/or Adults at Risk and require an Enhanced DBS with barred list check.
Safeguarding	Actions to protect Children and/or Adults at Risk from abuse, neglect, and exploitation, prevent harm to their health or development, and ensure safe and effective care to enable positive outcomes.
Spirit of Hockey - Code of Conduct	England Hockey's Code of Conduct and behavioural values expected of all individuals involved in hockey.

Sport Integrity	the independent disclosure and investigations process operated by Sport Resolutions.
Sport Resolutions	an independent, not-for-profit dispute resolution service for sport in the UK.
Statutory Agencies	Public bodies legally responsible for safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk, including police, Children's Social Care, Adult Social Care, health services, and the Disclosure and Barring Service.
Volunteer	An individual who gives their time without financial reward (other than reasonable expenses) to support hockey delivery or governance.
Welfare Officer	The nominated person within a club, county/area, region, or England Hockey responsible for promoting safeguarding practice, supporting safe recruitment, and managing/reporting concerns.

Links to Support

Ann Craft Trust
www.anncrafttrust.org — Leading UK organisation for safeguarding Adults at Risk and safeguarding Adults at Risk in sport.

Child Protection in Sport Unit
www.thecpsu.org.uk — Guidance and best practice on safeguarding in sport.

NHS England
111 | www.nhs.uk — Advice and urgent support for health concerns.

Adult Social Care Services (Local Authority)
Contact via local council websites — Local authorities have statutory responsibility for safeguarding Adults at Risk.

Police (Emergency)
999 — If someone is in immediate danger.

Police (Non-emergency)
101 — To report a crime or safeguarding concern.

Samaritans
116 123 | www.samaritans.org — Confidential emotional support for anyone in distress.

Mind
0300 123 3393 | www.mind.org.uk — Advice and support for people experiencing mental health problems.

Shout
Text **SHOUT** to 85258 | www.giveusashout.org — Free 24/7 text support for anyone struggling to cope.

Togetherall
www.togetherall.com — Moderated online community offering peer support for mental health.

National Domestic Abuse Helpline
0808 2000 247 | www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk — 24-hour confidential support for victims of domestic abuse.

Women's Aid
www.womensaid.org.uk — Information, support services and safety planning.

Men's Advice Line
0808 801 0327 | www.mensadviceline.org.uk — Support for male victims of domestic abuse.

Modern Slavery Helpline
08000 121 700 | www.modernslaveryhelpline.org — Advice and confidential reporting of exploitation or trafficking concerns.

Victim Support
0808 168 9111 | www.victimsupport.org.uk — Free and confidential support for victims of crime.