

NorthEast Sport Safeguarding Policy

Children, young people and adults at risk · Oct 18, 2026 · @Peter Curtis

1. Policy statement

Every child and young person who comes to North East Sport has the right to be safe, to be listened to and to enjoy their sport. Their welfare comes before everything else we do, including results.

N.E. Sport Community Interest Company (trading as North East Sport, company number 07068042) runs football, holiday camps, youth clubs and community programmes from Monkwearmouth Academy, Sunderland. This policy sets out how we keep children, young people and adults at risk safe, and what everyone working with us must do.

Our approach rests on three things:

1. **Prevention.** A positive, well run environment with trained adults who are good role models.
2. **Protection.** Clear procedures, so every concern is recognised, recorded and passed on quickly.
3. **Support.** For children and young people, for families, and for staff and volunteers who raise concerns.

We believe that:

The welfare of the child is paramount in every decision we make.

Every child has an equal right to protection, whatever their age, disability, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or background.

Some children are more vulnerable because of their circumstances, needs or communication, and we take extra care with them.

Safeguarding is everyone's job, from directors to young volunteers.

Working with parents, carers and other agencies is essential to keeping children safe.

2. Who this policy applies to

This policy applies to everyone who works or volunteers with North East Sport in any role and in any setting: directors, staff, sessional coaches, volunteers (including young volunteers and young leaders), contractors and anyone delivering activities on our behalf.

It covers all our activities, including North East Sport Youth FC, holiday camps, Sunrise and Sunset clubs, toddler football, youth clubs, digital health hubs, the Ranger programmes, school sessions, trips and anything we run online.

We expect partner organisations, schools and venues we work with to share our commitment and to have their own safeguarding arrangements in place.

3. Key safeguarding contacts

If a child is in immediate danger, call 999.

Who	Role	Contact
Lindsay Williams	Designated Safeguarding Lead and Club Welfare Officer	lindsay@northeastsport.co.uk
Peter Curtis	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and Club Welfare Officer	07883 885708, peter@northeastsport.co.uk
Sunderland Children's Safeguarding (Together for Children)	Referrals about a child, office hours	0191 561 7007, Safeguarding.Children@togetherforchildren.org.uk
Sunderland Emergency Duty Team	Referrals about a child, evenings, weekends, bank holidays	0191 520 5560
Sunderland LADO	Allegations about adults who work or volunteer with children	0191 561 3901, designatedofficer@togetherforchildren.org.uk
Sunderland adult safeguarding	Concerns about an adult at risk	0191 520 5552
Durham County FA safeguarding	Concerns linked to football	0191 387 2928

Who	Role	Contact
The FA Safeguarding Team	Concerns linked to football	0800 169 1863, safeguarding@thefa.com
NSPCC Helpline	Advice for adults	0808 800 5000, help@nspcc.org.uk
Childline	Free, confidential help for children	0800 1111
Police, non emergency		101

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy are named on our website, on the noticeboard at Monkwearmouth Academy and in every induction pack. Check these numbers when the policy is reviewed. Sources: [Sunderland Safeguarding Children Partnership](#), [Leading Education Together contact list](#), [Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Board](#), [Durham Women FC safeguarding policy 2026/27](#).

4. What safeguarding means

Child: anyone under 18.

Adult at risk: anyone 18 or over who has care and support needs and, because of those needs, cannot protect themselves from abuse or neglect (Care Act 2014).

Safeguarding: protecting children from harm, preventing harm to their health or development, making sure they grow up with safe and effective care, and acting so every child has the best outcomes.

Child protection: the action taken to protect a specific child who is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm.

Early help: support given as soon as a problem appears, to stop it getting worse.

Types of abuse

Type	What it can look like
Physical	Hitting, shaking, throwing, burning, or excessive training that harms a young player
Emotional	Constant criticism, shouting, humiliation, threats, or being made to feel worthless or scared

Type	What it can look like
Sexual	Forcing or enticing a child into sexual activity, online or in person, including grooming
Neglect	Persistent failure to meet basic needs such as food, clothing, warmth, safety or medical care
Bullying and cyberbullying	Repeated hurtful behaviour from adults or other children, including online
Child on child abuse	Harm caused by other children, including sexual harassment and violence
Exploitation	Child sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation and county lines
Radicalisation	Being drawn into extremist views or groups (the Prevent duty)
Domestic abuse	Living with, or being affected by, abuse between adults at home

Other concerns include female genital mutilation, forced marriage, honour based abuse, self harm and mental health crises. If you are unsure whether something counts, report it anyway.

5. Roles and responsibilities

Directors

The directors are responsible for making sure this policy is in place, followed and reviewed. Lindsay Williams is the named safeguarding director. The directors:

- make safeguarding a standing item at every directors' meeting;
- receive a safeguarding report from the Designated Safeguarding Lead at least once a year;
- make sure the organisation has the training, time and resources to keep children safe;
- oversee how allegations and whistleblowing concerns are handled.

Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy

Lindsay Williams is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Peter Curtis is the Deputy. Both also act as Club Welfare Officers for North East Sport Youth FC under FA requirements. They:

are the first point of contact for any safeguarding concern;
decide what action to take and make referrals to Together for Children, the police, the LADO or the FA;
keep safeguarding records secure and confidential;
make sure all staff and volunteers have the right DBS check and training before they start;
complete DSL or Club Welfare Officer training every two years;
review this policy every two years and after any serious incident.

If the concern involves the DSL, it goes to the Deputy. If it involves both, it goes straight to the LADO or the FA Safeguarding Team.

Coaches, staff and volunteers

Everyone working with us must:

read, sign and follow this policy and our code of conduct;
complete the safeguarding training required for their role;
report any concern to the DSL or Deputy the same day;
call 999 straight away if a child is in immediate danger.

6. Safer recruitment, induction and training

Recruitment

For every paid or volunteer role working with children we:

1. advertise the role with a clear statement of our commitment to safeguarding;
2. ask for an application form, including a declaration about criminal records and any safeguarding investigations;
3. hold an interview that tests the person's understanding of safeguarding;
4. take up two references, one from the most recent employer or someone who has seen them work with children;
5. carry out an enhanced DBS check with a check of the children's barred list where the role is eligible. North East Sport pays for volunteers' DBS checks. For football roles we use the FA's DBS process;
6. renew DBS checks at least every three years, in line with FA requirements, or sign people up to the DBS Update Service.

Nobody works unsupervised with children until their DBS check is back and cleared.

Induction

Every new member of staff or volunteer:

receives this policy, the code of conduct and the whistleblowing procedure, and signs to say they have read and will follow them;

is introduced to the DSL and Deputy and told how to report a concern; works alongside an experienced coach or leader until they are signed off.

Training

Who	Training	How often
All staff and volunteers	Safeguarding basics at induction, e.g. FA Safeguarding Children or equivalent	At induction, refreshed every 3 years
Coaches of under 18s	FA Safeguarding Children course	Every 3 years
DSL, Deputy and Club Welfare Officers	FA Welfare Officer training or Designated Safeguarding Lead training	Every 2 years
Directors	Safeguarding for trustees and directors	Every 3 years

The DSL keeps a training record for everyone and chases renewals before they expire.

7. Safe practice

The six Rs

1. **Recognise** the signs that a child may be at risk of harm.
2. **Respond** calmly when a child tells you something. Listen, don't ask leading questions, and don't promise to keep it secret.
3. **Report** it to the DSL or Deputy the same day, or call 999 if the child is in immediate danger.
4. **Record** what was said and seen, in the child's own words, signed and dated. 5.

Resolve by following up to make sure action has been taken.

6. **Reflect** on what happened and look after your own wellbeing. Talk to the DSL if it has affected you.

Code of conduct for adults

Everyone working with us must:

- treat every child with respect, fairly and without favouritism;

- keep to professional boundaries with children, young people and parents, in person and online;

- avoid being alone with a child where others cannot see. If it can't be avoided, tell another adult;

- never give lifts to a child alone unless a parent has agreed in advance and the DSL knows;

- never use physical punishment, humiliation or shouting at a child;

- only touch a child when it is needed for coaching or first aid, explain it first and do it in the open;

- never drink alcohol, smoke, vape or use drugs while responsible for children;

- follow the FA Respect codes on and off the pitch.

Sexual activity with anyone under 18 by an adult in a position of trust is a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, which since 2022 also covers sports coaches.

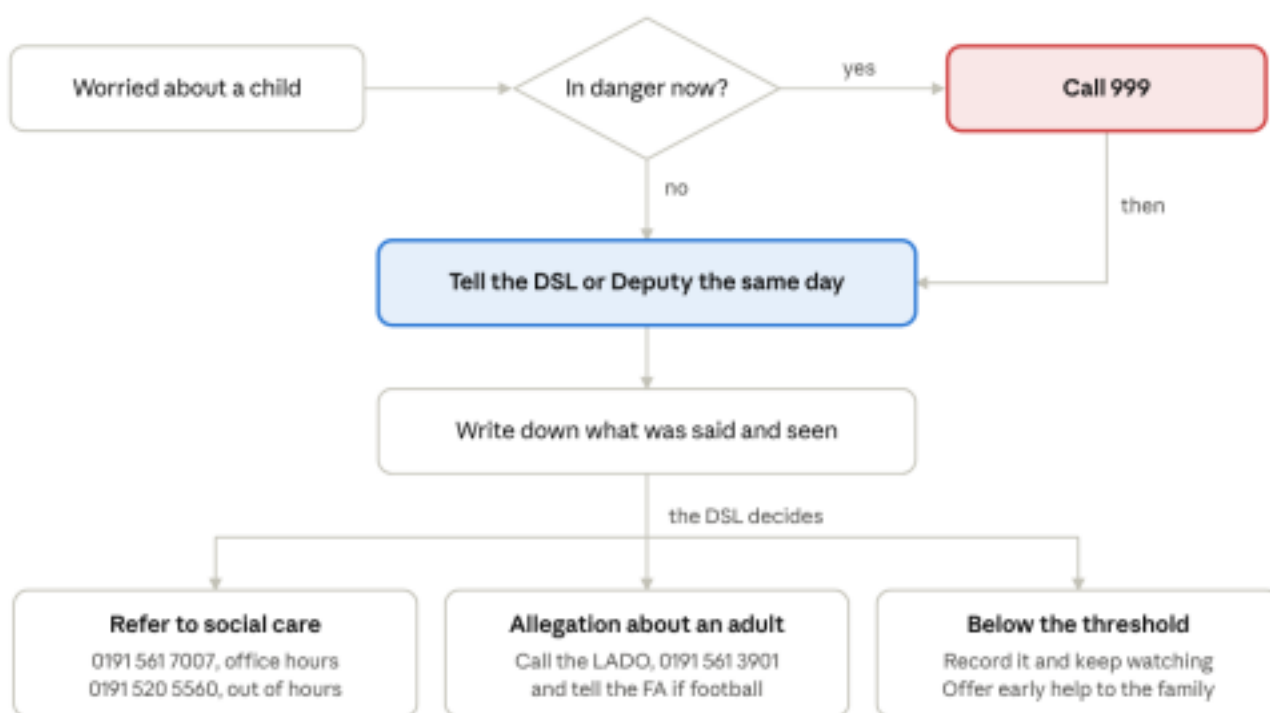
Supervision

We keep to FA and venue ratios for every activity, with at least two DBS checked adults present for any group. Changing areas, toilets and first aid are managed so no adult is alone with a child behind a closed door.

8. What to do if you are worried about a child

Any adult who is worried about a child tells the DSL or Deputy the same day. If a child is in immediate danger, call 999 first, then tell the DSL.

Every concern goes to the DSL the same day, unless a child is in danger now



Football related concerns are also reported to Durham County FA or the FA Safeguarding Team.

reporting a concern · 1 decision, 3 outcomes

If a child tells you something

Stay calm, listen and let them talk at their own pace.

Only ask open questions such as "Can you tell me more?" Never lead or suggest. Tell them they have done the right thing and that you will need to pass it on to keep them safe. Never promise to keep a secret.

Do not investigate, confront anyone or contact the person the concern is about. Write it down as soon as you can: the date, time, place, who was there, and what was said in

the child's own words. Sign it and give it to the DSL.

What the DSL does

The DSL decides, the same day where possible, whether to refer to Together for Children, the police, the LADO or the FA, or to record and monitor. Parents are normally told, unless that could put the child at greater risk; the DSL takes advice from Together for Children first when in doubt. If you are not happy with the response, you can contact Together for Children or the FA directly.

9. Allegations about staff or volunteers, and whistleblowing

Allegations

Any concern that an adult working with us has harmed a child, may have committed an offence against a child, or has behaved in a way that suggests they may be unsuitable to work with children goes to the DSL straight away. If it is about the DSL, it goes to the Deputy. If it is about both, go directly to the LADO or the FA.

The DSL will:

1. contact the LADO within one working day, and the FA Safeguarding Team if the person is involved in football;
2. follow the LADO's advice before speaking to the person involved;
3. agree with the LADO and directors whether the person should step back from their role while it is looked into. Stepping back is not a judgement of guilt;
4. keep a full, confidential record of what happened and the outcome.

Where someone is removed from work with children because they caused harm or posed a risk, we must refer them to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Whistleblowing

Anyone who is worried about poor or unsafe practice at North East Sport should raise it with the DSL, the Deputy or a director. You will be taken seriously and you will not be treated unfairly for raising a concern in good faith. If you don't feel able to raise it inside the club, contact the FA Safeguarding Team, the LADO or the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line on 0800 028 0285.

10. Photos, social media and online safety

Photos and video

North East Sport does not take photos or video of young people at our sessions, camps or clubs. Children come to us to play, not to be content. Staff and volunteers must not photograph or film children on their own phones.

If a photo of a child is ever needed for a specific reason, such as a team photo for a league or an award, we get written consent from a parent or carer first, never name the child alongside it, and delete it when it is no longer needed. Parents filming their own child at matches must follow FA guidance and the venue's rules.

Contact with children online

Staff and volunteers communicate about sessions with parents and carers, not directly with children under 16.

For young people aged 16 and 17, contact goes through club accounts or group messages that include another adult, and is only about club activities. Never send private messages to a child on social media, and never add children you work with as friends or followers on personal accounts.

Club social media is run by named staff, and never shows a child's name, school or location.

Online safety at our digital health hubs and youth clubs

Sessions that use devices or the internet are supervised, use filtered connections where possible, and include age appropriate advice on staying safe online. Concerns about online grooming, sharing of images or online bullying are reported to the DSL like any other concern.

11. Records, confidentiality and information sharing

Safeguarding records are factual, dated and signed, and kept separately from other club records, locked away or in a password protected folder only the DSL and Deputy can open.

Information is shared only with the people who need it to keep a child safe. The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR do not stop us sharing information to protect a child. Where a child may be at risk, we share it with Together for Children, the police or the FA, with consent where possible and without it where waiting would put the child at risk.

Records about safeguarding concerns are kept until the child's 25th birthday. Records of

allegations about adults are kept until the person's normal retirement age or for 10 years, whichever is longer, in line with government guidance on managing allegations. Our [privacy policy](#) explains how we handle personal information more generally.

12. Related policies, legislation and guidance

Our related policies

Read this policy alongside our code of conduct, whistleblowing procedure, safer recruitment procedure, anti bullying policy, behaviour policy, health and safety policy (including first aid and medication), photography and social media policy, and [privacy policy](#).

[policy](#).

Legislation and guidance

- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- Sunderland Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures
- Sexual Offences Act 2003, and the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 (positions of trust in sport)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Care Act 2014 (adults at risk)
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the Prevent duty)
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- Equality Act 2010
- The FA Safeguarding Children Policy and FA Respect codes of conduct

13. Review and sign off

This policy is reviewed every two years, and sooner after a serious incident, a change in the law or guidance, or a change in our safeguarding leads. The contact numbers in section 3 are checked every year.

Version	2.0, replaces the policy due for review on 30 January 2027
Approved by the directors on	Oct 31, 2026

Next review due	Oct 31, 2028
Signed, Designated Safeguarding Lead	Lindsay Williams
P Curtis	Peter Curtis