**This section is divided into two parts:**

**PART TWO**

**TAKING APPROPRIATE ACTION**

**Once a concern has been reported it is important that appropriate action is taken. It will not be the club’s responsibility to decide if action needs to be taken unless a child is at immediate risk of harm. It is, however, the club’s responsibility to report the concerns appropriately in accordance with England Lacrosse’s policies, procedures, and systems**

**PART ONE**

**RESPONDING TO CONCERNS**

**If a young person or adult has concerns, it is important that they can report them to someone at the club. It is therefore important that the club members know how to respond and who will do this**

**Responding to concerns**

Concerns may be raised in response to the following: There are several reasons a person might need to report a concern:

* Something a young person has said to you – a disclosure.
* Signs or suspicions of abuse
* Allegations made against a member of staff or a volunteer.
* Allegations made about a parent, carer or someone not working within the sport.
* Bullying
* A breach of the England Lacrosse’s Code of Conduct (Respect)
* Observation of inappropriate behaviour
* Anything which makes a young person uncomfortable based on inappropriate behaviour of an adult or changes in behaviour of a young person.
* Inappropriate behaviour of a young person towards another person
* Behaviour being contrary to England Lacrosse’s Safeguarding and Protecting Young People in Lacrosse Policy and procedures and Code of Conduct
* Receiving a call from a statutory agency i.e., Police, Children’s Services
* Reading or hearing something of concern about a member of the Lacrosse Community in the media

***This list is not exhaustive***

It is important to note that even if an incident or an allegation occurs outside the lacrosse environment, it should still be reported to England Lacrosse if the adult or young person concerned participates in lacrosse. This is in accordance with standard practice in sport.

**Always:**

* Stay calm.
* Reassure the person reporting their concerns that they have done the right thing in telling you.
* Keep an open mind.
* Listen carefully to what is said and take them seriously.
* Find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others – do not promise to keep secrets.
* Ask questions for clarification only, and always avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer (i.e., Closed questions – yes, no answers). To help you to do this, try to ask questions starting with tell me about, explain to me, describe.
* Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared.
* Report the incident to your Club Welfare Officer or England Lacrosse Lead Safeguarding Consultant
* Record in writing what was said using the young person’s own words as soon as possible, using England Lacrosse’s Safeguarding Referral Form.

**Never:**

* Panic
* Make promises you cannot keep, including promises to keep secrets.
* Make a young person repeat the information unnecessarily.
* Question the detail of what the young person has shared.
* Delay in reporting to your Club Welfare Officer or the England Lacrosse Lead Safeguarding Consultant
* Make assumptions.
* Approach the alleged abuser.
* Take sole responsibility.

**Important Reminders:**

* Your organisations Welfare Officer should be your first point of contact.
* Welfare Officers should not deal with issues in isolation, they should receive support in dealing with issues by other trusted people (will vary according to organisation)
* Minimise the number that you share a concern with, only share information on a need-to-know basis.
* If in doubt – as for advice from your organisation’s Welfare Officer or England Lacrosse Lead Safeguarding Consultant
* Deal with incidents and concerns quickly – problems escalate when they do not get addressed.

***It is acknowledged that taking appropriate action is never easy. The discovery that a member of a club or colleague may be acting inappropriately, bullying, or abusing a child will raise concerns and feelings both for the person receiving the concern, and amongst other colleagues.***

**These emotions may evolve around feelings of:**

D**oubt: Is it true?**

**Guilt: Should I have known?**

**Did I miss something?**

**Did I have any suspicions?**

**Should I have said something?**

**Fear: Will others or I be suspected?**

**What actions should be taken?**

**Confusion: What will happen?**

**What will be the effect?**

**Concerns: What can I do to support all those people who may need support?**

**How will it affect further relationships or contact with children?**

**Are there systems in place to expose future situations?**

***These are natural responses but remember that the safety and welfare of young people is paramount.***

**Remember:**

* It is not the club’s responsibility to decide if a child is being abused or poor practice has occurred.
* England Lacrosse will manage any concerns or allegations, with the club’s cooperation and assistance.
* It is your responsibility to report your concerns, not act on them.
* Speak to your Club Welfare & Safeguarding Officer or the England Lacrosse Lead Safeguarding Consultant who will:

Support you.

Listen to you.

Take all concerns seriously.

Act immediately within lacrosse’s policies, procedures, and systems

Advise you what actions you need to take if required)

**SCENARIO 2:**

**Sudden weight loss**

**Concern:**

Your Welfare Officer receives a call from the Head Coach who has concerns about a player. The player has been on the squad for the past two seasons and the coach has noticed that they have lost a lot of weight recently. The weight loss is affecting their ability to train, they are lethargic and struggling to keep up. Other players have commented on them being a fussy eater.

**Response/things to think about**

* Welfare Officer to manage this situation sensitively and take advice from EL Safeguarding Consultant
* Make a note of what was reported, including time, names, details.
* Action must be taken – you cannot ignore and do nothing.
* Do not make assumptions.
* Has anyone spoken to the player directly? How is the player? How do they feel? Are they concerned? Are they looking for help?
* Have the player or their parents disclosed any information to the coach or Welfare Officer in relation to this players health?
* How old is the player? This may have an impact on parental involvement.
* EL would always advocate parental involvement, unless there is good reason not to
* If the player is happy for you to speak to parent, do, if not, seek advice

**DEALING WITH CONCERNS – WHEN TO INVOLVE ENGLAND LACROSSE**

It is important to deal with issues swiftly and effectively, using the most appropriate people and level of support. The following examples highlight concerns and responses at the most appropriate level for the concern:

**SCENARIO 1: WhatsApp group conversation (Banter)**

**Concern:**

There is a 14-year-old male playing alongside adults in the local league. The club are using WhatsApp as a method of communication. The boy’s parent has read the conversation and is concerned about the content in the chat and suggest it is inappropriate. The parent has raised this with the team captain and their response was ‘they need to man up’ it is only banter.’

**Response/things to think about**

* This type of concern should be reported to the club/organisation Welfare Officer, who may seek advice from EL Lead Safeguarding Consultant
* Always take concerns raised seriously.
* Make a record of what was reported as soon as possible and keep notes of any subsequent conversations/actions.
* WhatsApp terms of use now state individuals must be 16 years old to use WhatsApp therefore clubs should not use this method this method of communication below this age.
* At this stage there is no detail about what is inappropriate about the chat – do not make assumptions.
* Do not allow ‘banter’ to be used as an excuse. Banter becomes bullying when there is an imbalance of power, when its consistent or hurtful. Excessive and repetitive banter can become bullying.
* How easy is it for the 14yr old to say they are not comfortable with this chat?
* Is the conversation still available on WhatsApp? WO could review -discuss content and its appropriateness with EL if necessary. Depending on nature of messages, will depend on action required. Complete the safeguarding referral form and contact your Welfare Officer. In their absence contact EL Safeguarding Consultant on +447546614756 or +447729720149 or email [Safeguarding@englandlacrosse.co.uk](mailto:Safeguarding@englandlacrosse.co.uk)
* Additional contact detail can be found in the ‘Useful Contacts’ document.

****

**SCENARIO 3: Call from statutory agency**

**Concern:**

Your club Chairperson receives a call from the local police force with information relating to one of your umpired who has been arrested for possession of inappropriate images of under eighteen’s. The club Chairperson calls the Welfare Officer and proposes to hold a committee meeting to discuss this.

**Response/things to think about:**

* Make a record of what was said, including names, numbers, dates, times etc. and as much detail as possible.
* Phone EL Safeguarding Lead Consultant immediately, do not discuss this matter with the committee, any other club member, or the umpire himself.
* EL Safeguarding Case Management Group is consulted on the incident and will lead the process for establishing facts, liaison with statutory agencies and will inform club of any actions agreed.
* England Lacrosse will advise the club on next steps and any relevant communication with the umpire and membership.



**Taking appropriate action**

England Lacrosse has clear procedures for reporting concerns. It is important that you follow the procedure detailed and fulfil YOUR role in the process. **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.**

**How do you report the concerns?**

See diagrams below illustrating the reporting process depending on whether the concerns are from within or outside the lacrosse environment. It is important that information regarding the concerns be recorded properly and promptly. To assist with this process, England Lacrosse has developed a Safeguarding Referral Form which outlines the information that is required. As soon as possible after concerns have been reported to you, complete the Safeguarding Referral Form, and contact your Club Welfare Officer. In their absence, contact the England Lacrosse Lead Safeguarding Consultant on 0161 974 7757 or e-mail.

safeguarding@Englandlacrosse.co.uk

**To whom do you report the concerns?**

If the England Lacrosse Lead Safeguarding Consultant is not available, and a child is at immediate risk or in danger, you must avoid delay and seek advice from your local authority Children Social Care Department (previously Social Services) or the Police. You should report to the Local Authority Children’s Social Care Department (Social Services) or Police in the area that the child lives. As soon as possible, inform the England Lacrosse Lead Safeguarding Consultant in addition, explain the action taken to date.

For other situations, where a child is not at immediate risk or danger:

**Working in an affiliated club:**

You must report your concerns, or any information received to the Club Welfare & Safeguarding Officer, who will refer the matter to the England Lacrosse Lead Safeguarding Consultant.

**Working in a school:**

You must inform the designated teacher, who will follow their reporting procedures. Also, advise the England Lacrosse Lead Safeguarding Consultant for their information. England Lacrosse and the school will work to safeguarding protocol and procedures that have been developed. If your concern is regarding the Welfare & Safeguarding Officer, report directly to the England Lacrosse Lead Safeguarding Consultant.

**What happens next?**

Statutory Agencies will follow procedures under The Children and Families Act 2014, and Government Guidance “Every Child Matters: Change for Children” and “Working Together to Safeguard Children”. Where a concern is reported to England Lacrosse and further action is required, the England Lacrosse Lead Welfare Consultant and Safeguarding Group will follow the Safeguarding and Protecting Young People Complaints and Disciplinary Regulations. These are available on request from England Lacrosse and online at www.Englandlacrosse.co.uk. at all times, England Lacrosse will support and communicate with the Club Welfare & Safeguarding Officer where required in the management of the situation.

**In some circumstances, it may be most appropriate for the matter to be managed at local level e.g., on matters relating to minor poor practice or bullying. If the England Lacrosse Lead Safeguarding Consultant will give this appropriate, suitable guidance.**

**References: HM Government 2018: Working Together to Safeguard Children**

<https://www.gov.ukj/government/publicaitons/working-together-to-safeguard-children-2018>

[Children and Families Act 2014 (legislation.gov.uk)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents/enacted)



**Reporting Concerns of Possible Abuse WITHIN the Lacrosse Environment**

**What to do if you are concerned about the behaviour of any volunteer or staff of**

**England Lacrosse or any other member of the Lacrosse community**

A concern is raised regarding a child or the behaviour of an adult in lacrosse towards another young person.

Call an ambulance and inform the doctor that there is a child welfare concern.

YES

Does the young person require immediate medical attention?

Report concerns to your Welfare Officer who will:

Seek advice from EL Lead Safeguarding Consultant

Complete an EL safeguarding referral form and send to EL Lead Safeguarding Consultant

Matter referred to Welfare Officer with guidance.

YES

Initial assessment by EL Lead Safeguarding Consultant, to include potential referral to statutory agencies.

**NO CASE TO ANSWER**

Information presented to the Safeguarding Group. Decision taken by them on appropriate course of action.

**Potential outcomes**

**There are several potential outcomes from this process; therefore, the list is not exhaustive:**

**Referred to club/organisation with advice on process to be followed.**

**Training, retraining, or mentoring recommended.**

**Conditions applied to further involvement in lacrosse.**

**Interim suspension, pending further enquiries.**

**Referral to statutory agencies**

**Sharing information with statutory agencies and other sports**

**Case passed to EL Disciplinary Panel to be dealt with under the EL Safeguarding Regulations**

**It is natural to be concerned about the potential implications of reporting concerns.**

**These are natural responses but remember that the safety and welfare of young people is paramount. Reported concerns will be dealt with professionally and confidentially.**

**Reporting Concerns of Possible Abuse OUTSIDE the Lacrosse Environment**

**What to do if you are concerned that a young person is being abused outside the lacrosse**

**environment (but that concern is identified through that young person’s involvement in lacrosse).**

You are concerned that a young person could be being abused outside the lacrosse environment.

Does the young person require immediate medical attention?

If yes call an ambulance and inform the Doctor that there is a child welfare concern

Report any concerns to the Welfare & Safeguarding Officer or English Lacrosse Lead Safeguarding Consultant who will refer the matter to the Local Authority (LA) Children’s Social Care Department (previously Social Services) or the Police without delay. Make a record of anything the child has said or what you have seen, or heard, if possible, with dates and times.

Keep an accurate record of all conversations that you have and with whom (e.g., EL Lead Safeguarding Consultant, LA Children’s Social Care Dept. (Social Services), the Police, parents).

Take advice from LA Children’s Social Care Department (Social Services) or the Police whether it is appropriate to discuss the matter with parents.

If the Welfare & Safeguarding Officer/English Lacrosse Lead Safeguarding Consultant is not available, refer the matter to LA Children’s Social Care Department (Social Services) or Police without delay.

**EL Lead Safeguarding Consultant - Tel: 07785763620 Email** [**Safeguarding@englandlacrosse.co.uk**](mailto:Safeguarding@englandlacrosse.co.uk)

**NSPCC Helpline (free 24-hour helpline) Tel 0808 800 50000**

**Confidentiality**

**GOOD PRACTICE IN SHARING INFORMATION**

Some information that may need to be shared regarding a concern for the well-being of a young person may be personal and/or sensitive.

**The following principles are good practice in how this information is shared:**

**GOLDEN RULES OF SHARING SENSITIVE INFORMATION**

1. The Data Protection Act is not a barrier to sharing information it provides a framework to ensure personal information is shared appropriately.
2. Be open and honest with the young person (and/or their family where appropriate) about why, what mow and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
3. Seek advice if you are in any doubt. Advice could come from EL Safeguarding Consultant, NSPCC, Local Authority Children’s Social Care Dept. (Social Services) or the Police. It may be possible to gain the advice without disclosing the identity of the young person.
4. Share with consent where appropriate and, where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. You may still share information without consent if, in your judgement, that lack of consent can be overridden in the interest of the young person. You will need to base your decision on the facts of the situation.
5. Consider safety and well-being: Base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the young person and others who may be affected by their actions.
6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure: Ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, share only with those people who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion and is share securely.
7. Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared with whom and for what purpose. (Inform the EL Lead Safeguarding Consultant)

Every effort must be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained when an allegation has been made and is being investigated.

Only tell individuals who need to know and can help to manage the concern.

**Confidentiality is essential and if maintained will ensure:**

* the safety of the young person involved.
* that action is taken to protect the young person.
* that individuals involved in any complaint are.

protected from gossip and assumptions.

that individuals who have a complaint against

them receive fair treatment, without prejudice or

pre-judgment

* that individuals who have a complaint against

them receive fair treatment, without prejudice or

pre-judgement

* That all policies, procedures, and systems can

work to manage any situation quickly,

professionally, and effectively.

**Impact if confidentiality is breached.**

If confidentiality is breached the following can happen:

* The child is put in danger either by further

inappropriate action of any adult involved or

other individuals who hear about any concern

through rumours

* Any investigation by either England Lacrosse or

the statutory agencies may be invalidated by

misinformation or rumours

* Individuals with a complaint against them may be

victims of inappropriate behaviour from club

members the policies, procedures, and systems in

place will not support or uphold any complaint or

concern

* The policies, procedures and systems in place will

not support or uphold any complaint or concern.

**Whistle blowing policy**

If there is a concern about the behaviour of an adult towards a young person, it is important that you share your concerns with the EL Lead Safeguarding Consultant.

All information received and discussed will be treated in confidence and only shared with those individuals within England Lacrosse who will be able to manage and resolve the situation. On occasion, it may be necessary to seek advice, or inform the statutory agencies e.g. Social Services or the Police. All concerns will be taken seriously in addition, managed per England Lacrosse’s Safeguarding Young People Policies and Procedures.

**General principles**

A member of the Lacrosse community is often the first to realise that a young person’s safety and welfare are under threat. However, they may not express their concerns because they feel that speaking up would be too difficult to manage. It may also be that they fear harassment or victimisation. In these circumstances, it may be easier for them to ignore the concern rather than report what may just be a suspicion of poor practice.

England Lacrosse is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, honesty, and accountability. In line with that commitment, individuals are encouraged, if they have serious concerns about any aspect of a young person’s safety and welfare; to come forward in addition, voice those concerns.

This policy makes it clear that individuals can raise a matter of concern without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination, or disadvantage. The policy is intended to encourage and enable individuals to raise serious concerns within England Lacrosse rather than overlooking a problem or blowing the whistle outside.

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

**Safeguards**

England Lacrosse is committed to good practice and high standards and wants to be supportive of everyone within the Lacrosse Community.

England Lacrosse recognises that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make, not least because of the fear of reprisal from those responsible for the alleged poor practice. 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 child or young person concerned.

England Lacrosse will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation (including informal pressures) 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/abuse, which requires the cases to be linked /dealt with together.

**Confidentiality**

The England Lacrosse will do its best to protect the identity of the whistle-blower when they raise a concern and do not want their name to be disclosed. It must be appreciated that the investigation process may reveal the source of the information and a statement by the whistle-blower 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**

This policy encourages the whistle-blower to put their name to their allegation. Concerns expressed anonymously are much less powerful, but they will be considered (at the discretion of the England Lacrosse Safeguarding Group). In exercising the discretion, the factors to be considered would include:

The seriousness of the issues raised

The credibility of the concern

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, England Lacrosse’s disciplinary procedure will apply.

**Use of the Whistle Blowing Policy**

The Whistle blowing Policy should only be followed if the person raising the concern feels unable to follow the standard reporting procedures as set out in England Lacrosse’s Safeguarding and Protecting Young People in Lacrosse Policy and Procedures.

**How to raise a concern**

Individuals should raise the concern in the first instance with the EL Lead Safeguarding Consultant on **0161 974 7757** or by post to England Lacrosse, Regional Arena & National Squash Centre, Rowsley Street, Manchester M11 3FF (you should mark the envelope ‘private & confidential’) or e-mail: safeguarding@Englandlacrosse.co.uk if you believe that you have not received a satisfactory response to your concern, you should contact the Chief Executive Officer.

Concerns may be made verbally or in writing to the EL Lead Safeguarding Consultant (as above). The individual should set out the background and history of the concern, giving names, dates, and places where possible and the reason they are particularly concerned about the situation. The earlier the individual expresses concern, the easier it is for someone to act. Although the whistle-blower is not expected to prove the truth of an allegation, they will need to demonstrate to the England Lacrosse Lead Safeguarding Consultant that there are sufficient grounds for their concern. If your concern is about the England Lacrosse Lead Safeguarding Consultant, you should refer the matter to the Chief Executive Officer. If you do not want, or feel unable, to report the matter to England Lacrosse, many external agencies are also available for reporting purposes.

**How will England Lacrosse respond?**

The action taken by England Lacrosse will depend on the nature of the concern. In all cases, the matter will be referred to the England Lacrosse Welfare Group. To protect individuals, it is likely that the EL Lead Safeguarding Consultant will conduct initial enquiries so that the Welfare Group can decide 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 whistle-blower 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 whistle-blower as part of the investigation process. When any meeting is arranged, the whistle-blower 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. England Lacrosse will take steps to minimise any difficulties, which individuals may experience because of raising a concern. For instance, if the whistle-blower is required to give evidence in criminal or disciplinary proceedings, England Lacrosse will advise them about the procedure. England Lacrosse accepts that the whistle-blower needs to be assured that the matter has been properly addressed. Subject to legal constraints, they will receive information about the outcome of any those whose actions caused them concern. In addition, if appropriate, what policy changes are to be made to minimise the possibility of a similar concern being raised in the future.

**How can the matter be taken further?**

This policy is intended to provide individuals with a way in which they can raise concerns about the safety and welfare of any young person involved in any lacrosse activity under the authority of England Lacrosse. England Lacrosse hopes individuals will be satisfied that any child protection issues they raise has been considered properly. If they are not satisfied, and if they feel it is right to take the matter outside England Lacrosse, they should contact:

Their local area Safeguarding Children’s Board (LSCB)

Their local Children’s Social Care Dept. (Social Services)

Their local police

If they do take the matter outside England Lacrosse, they will need to ensure that they do not disclose prohibited confidential information. They must check this before they make contact.

**What to do if you have a complaint about the way England Lacrosse has dealt with a Safeguarding Young People or Child Protection issue**

England Lacrosse is committed to providing high levels of customer satisfaction. If you are not satisfied with the way England Lacrosse has managed a Safeguarding or Protecting Young People issue, please refer to the last section of the Safeguarding Young People in Lacrosse Complaints and Disciplinary Regulations.

