

# MANAGING ALLEGATIONS OR CONCERNS ABOUT PEOPLE WHO WORK OR VOLUNTEER WITH CHILDREN / YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY

## Purpose and scope

ESF Events is committed to ensuring that any allegation or concern relating to the behaviour of a person who works or volunteers with children or young people is managed promptly, sensitively and consistently.

This policy applies regardless of where the alleged incident occurred and aims to:

- Protect children and young people from harm
- Ensure appropriate and proportionate action is taken
- Provide fair support to the person who is the subject of the allegation

This policy applies where an allegation or concern indicates that a person may be unsuitable to continue working with children or young people in their current role or in any capacity.

All ESF Events staff and volunteers must understand their responsibility to report concerns.

All allegations or concerns must be reported immediately to the ESF Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

## Legal framework

This policy is informed by and complies with:

- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- Relevant National Governing Body Safeguarding Policies and Procedures
- CPSU / NSPCC guidance
- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) requirements

ESF Events subscribes to the safeguarding requirements of the appropriate National Governing Bodies and is committed to complying with all relevant legislation, statutory guidance and best-practice recommendations.

## Scope of allegations

This policy applies where it is alleged that a member of staff or volunteer has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child or young person

- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved in a way that indicates they may be unsuitable to work with children or young people, including verbal or online abuse

### **Managing an allegation**

There may be up to three strands to the management of an allegation:

- A police investigation into a possible criminal offence
- Children's Social Care enquiries into the welfare of a child
- ESF Events' internal consideration, including disciplinary action

These processes may run concurrently.

### **Confidentiality**

Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality and prevent unnecessary publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered. Information will only be shared with those who need to know to safeguard children and manage the process appropriately.

### **Resignations and settlement agreements**

The resignation of, or cessation of services by, a person who is the subject of an allegation will not prevent the allegation from being investigated or concluded.

Where possible, the individual will be given an opportunity to respond to the allegation. The process will continue even if the person chooses not to cooperate.

No agreement will prevent:

- A police investigation where appropriate
- A referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) where the legal threshold is met

### **Record keeping**

A clear and accurate record will be kept of:

- The allegation
- How it was managed and resolved
- Decisions made and actions taken

Records will be stored securely on the individual's confidential file and retained until normal retirement age or for 10 years, whichever is longer. This supports safe referencing and avoids unnecessary re-investigation.

### **Timescales**

All allegations will be managed as quickly as possible while ensuring a fair, thorough and proportionate process. Avoiding unnecessary delay is in the best interests of all parties.

### **Initial considerations**

The ESF Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- Notify the appropriate National Governing Body of all allegations
- Determine, in consultation where appropriate, whether Police or Children’s Social Care should be contacted
- Inform the person who is the subject of the allegation as soon as it is appropriate to do so

### **Suspension**

Suspension may be considered where:

- A child or young person may be at risk of significant harm
- The allegation requires police investigation
- The allegation is sufficiently serious to potentially result in dismissal

Suspension is a neutral act and will not be automatic. Each case will be considered individually.

### **Action at the conclusion of a case**

Where an allegation is substantiated and a person is dismissed, resigns or ceases to provide services, the ESF Designated Safeguarding Lead will inform the appropriate National Governing Body safeguarding team and make a DBS referral where required.

### **Reporting concerns**

Safeguarding children is everyone’s responsibility. Any concern about the behaviour of a person working or volunteering with children must be reported immediately.

Report concerns to: ESF Events Safeguarding phone line: 07947 313302 (*for the duration of the festival*)

Or contact:

- Appropriate National Governing Body (FA, SYFA, England Netball, RFU, RFL)
- Police or Children’s Social Care
- Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU): [cpsu@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:cpsu@nspcc.org.uk)
- NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000 | [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)