

Scottish Handball Association
Child Wellbeing & Protection Policy & Procedures

Reviewed January 2025

Section 2

Appointment & Selection Procedure

Responding to Concerns Procedure

Case Review Procedure

Appointment & Selection Procedure

Scottish Handball will take all reasonable steps required to ensure that those who are working with children and vulnerable adults are suitable to do so, have been recruited appropriately and reflects the values of the sport. These steps will include ensuring that those who are not suitable to be working with children and vulnerable adults are prevented from doing so.

For all positions that require regular contact with children or vulnerable adults the following safe recruitment procedure must be implemented and completed. The aim of this procedure is to make sure that Scottish Handball and its member clubs select the best possible candidate for the role.

1. Advertising & Pre-Applications Information

All forms of advertising used to recruit members for positions involving regular contact with children or vulnerable adults will include the following:

- The goals, aims and values of the club and, where appropriate, details of the programme involved.
- The responsibilities of the role (e.g., a role description).
- The level of experience or qualifications required (e.g., experience of working with children is an advantage).
- Details of the club's open and positive stance on child wellbeing & an application form to obtain relevant information on the applicant interested.

2. Reviewing Applications & Recruitment Conversations

All applications must be reviewed by a select group of appropriate club members i.e., the club committee.

Once reviewed, consideration must be given to having a recruitment conversation with possible candidates to assess their suitability.

Recruitment conversations can be given in-person, through a virtual platform or over the phone. If formal interviews are taken, they must have more than one person and discussions must be held in relation to suitability for the role.

3. Recruitment Decisions

Following the above steps, you will need to consider all information that has been collected so far to make a decision whether or not to accept or reject the applicants.

- When considering who to appoint, make sure the chosen candidate matches the job description and requirements originally identified for the role. You must think about:
- Did they meet the values and attitudes of the club?
- Will they fit into the ethos and culture of the club?
- Will they help build on our culture and drive it forward?
- How much experience do they have to bring to the role?
- What advanced skills or experience can they bring to the role to enhance the experience for children and young people?
- How much training will they need now or in the future?
- Do I have any unaddressed doubts or concerns about this individual?

A ranking process for all your shortlisted candidates based on how well they fit with the club must be undertaken. Don't be distracted by a candidate's skillset and experience alone. Having one individual who doesn't have the right attitude within the club can be detrimental to the culture and moral of the whole club. The final decisions on recruitment must be approved by the club committee.

4. Offer of Position

Once a decision has been made to appoint an individual, an offer will be presented in writing to the candidate including the details of the position, any special requirements and the obligations. These may include:

- Agreement to the policies and procedures of the club.
- Suitable references being completed
- For a position in regulated work with children and /or vulnerable adults, the return of a suitable Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme membership certificate completed through Scottish Handball
- Any training or education that is required for the role (e.g., Child Wellbeing & Protection in Sport course)
- The probation period and responsibilities of the role.
- The candidate who has been offered the position should be encouraged to accept the offer in writing so that they can confirm they understand the role they are accepting and the responsibilities that come with it.

5. References

2 references will be sought after as required. Where possible at least one of these references will be from the most recent employer or a voluntary organisation where the position required working with children or vulnerable adults in any of the following capacities:

- Employee
- Volunteer
- Work Experience

Some examples of references that should be expected are as follows:

- A previous or current club/association/group the individual volunteered at;
- A previous or current employer;
- A club/association/group from another sport that they volunteer/work in;
- Previous community/volunteer work outside of handball or sport;

Some examples of the best placed individuals to provide a reference should any of the above prove difficult are:

- A teacher/lecturer from school, college or university, whichever is most recent;
- If self-employed, a long-term client/customer or accountant.
- A club that they previously participated at;
- A long-term close family friend (they shouldn't be a recent friend);

If the person has no experience of working with children or vulnerable adults, specific training requirements must be agreed before appointment.

6. PVG Scheme Membership

Scottish Handball is registered with Disclosure Scotland/Volunteer Scotland Disclosure Services to process PVG applications on behalf of affiliated clubs. Individuals carrying out regulated work with children or vulnerable adults within Scottish Handball's member clubs must be members of the PVG Scheme before starting a role with children or vulnerable adults.

To do this please contact the Scottish Handball Lead Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer or visit Scottish Handball's website here: <https://handball.scot/get-involved/volunteer/apply-for-pvg/>

Applicants from Overseas

Applicants from overseas that are appointed to regulated work with children or vulnerable adults within a Scottish Handball affiliated club must also join the PVG Scheme.

Applicants from overseas must prove their 'right to work' in the UK and should be asked to provide a police check from their relevant country where possible. Information on how to complete an overseas check can be found via the Home Office website here: www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-records-checks-for-overseas-applicants. Where this is not possible, or in addition to the police check, the following information, where relevant to the position, will be requested:

- A statement from the governing body in the country of origin of the applicant and/or the country from which they are transferring regarding their participation and suitability for the position.

7. Induction

Appointing a new individual within the club can be daunting to all parties. An induction will help them understand the club needs, help them meet key people, help them settle in quicker and support the development of good relationships around the club.

The induction process for the newly appointed member should include the following:

- An assessment of training, individual aims and any other needs and aspirations.
- Clarification, agreement and signing up to the Club's Child Wellbeing and Protection Policy
- Clarification of the expectations, roles and responsibilities of the position in question.
- Agreement to the Set the Standards document
- Details of any probation periods agreed

8. Training

Newly appointed members will complete the following training over an agreed period:

- sportscotland's Child Wellbeing and Protection in Sport course
- Any other identified training needs.

On completion of the required course, the newly appointed member must submit their certificates to the Club Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer who in turn, must forward it on to the Scottish Handball Lead Wellbeing and Protection Officer at childprotection@scottishhandball.com

9. Monitoring and Performance Appraisal

All members who have contact with children or vulnerable adults must be monitored and their performance appraised. This will provide an opportunity to evaluate progress, set new goals, identify training needs and address any concerns of poor practice.

Any concerns arising should be reported to the Club Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer or Scottish Handball Lead Wellbeing and Protection Officer as soon as possible.

Responding to Concern Procedure

Everyone's Responsibility

If a member of staff or volunteer has concerns relating to a child or young person, this may range from neglect to emotional or sexual abuse, either through handball or outside of it, they have a responsibility to recognise that concern, record the concern and report it to Scottish Handball's Lead Wellbeing & Protection Officer.

- A member of staff or volunteer does not have the responsibility to investigate the concern, but they must:
- Reassure the person raising the concern that they have done the right thing
- Listen without judgement
- Record anything that is said in the exact words used
- Report the concern Scottish Handball's Lead Wellbeing & Protection Officer.
- If concerned about the immediate safety of the child or young person, take the necessary steps to ensure their safety and contact the police

All concerns will be investigated by Scottish Handball's Lead Wellbeing & Protection Officer.

Identifying a Wellbeing Concern, Poor Practice and/or Abuse

Poor practice, wellbeing concerns and abuse can occur in many situations including the home, school and the handball club. We know that some individuals will actively seek access to children through sport to harm them. Using the definitions above and considering the following indicators, we can identify if a child or young person is experiencing a wellbeing concern, poor practice and/or abuse (these lists are not exhaustive).

A Wellbeing Concern

- A wellbeing concern may be identified by the child, or by anyone who knows or supports the child and can be identified for many reasons, such as (but not limited to) the following:
- A child may be worried, anxious, or upset about an event/set of circumstances, including socio-economic circumstances
- A coach/parent/carer or family member may have noticed a change in the child's behaviour, demeanour, or developmental progress
- A coach/parent/carer may have concerns about the impact on the child of an event or set of circumstances
- The SHANARRI indicators (Appendix 3) can also be used as an indicator, for example:
 - Healthy – the child has started to self-harm, is depressed or shows other signs of poor physical or mental health
 - Achieving - the child has struggles to master and develop skills at training that are normal for that age and stage of child
 - Included - a child who is being excluded or bullied (see Scottish Handball's Anti Bullying policy)

Poor Practice

The following definitions set out common areas within sport where poor practice can occur:

- Breaches of Scottish Handball's Child Wellbeing & Protection policy, procedures, and practice notes.
- Breaches of recognised best practice in coaching and/or officiating
- Practices that are known to be significant risk factors in cases of abuse
- Practices that may be on the fringe of abuse and/or if repeated, would amount to abuse
- Practices that may be carried out with the best intentions but fall into a category of behaviours that are used by people who sexually abuse or 'groom' children/young people
- A more detailed definition of Poor Practice can be found in Appendix 6.

Child Abuse

This definition of child abuse includes placing children at risk through something a person has done to them or something a person is failing to do for them. For those working with children and young people the definition gets broken down further into categories of abuse:

- Emotional abuse
- Physical injury
- Neglect
- Sexual abuse

These categories are not mutually exclusive, for example, a child experiencing physical abuse is undoubtedly experiencing emotional abuse as well. The following definitions show the different ways in which abuse may be experienced by a child but are not exhaustive, as the individual circumstances of abuse will vary from child to child¹⁰. More information on each category can be found in Appendix 7.

Even for those experienced in working with child abuse, it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. It is not the responsibility of those working in handball to decide that child abuse is occurring, but it is their responsibility to act on any concerns.

There are many indicators that a child may be suffering abuse, some general signs are included in the following list (Please note that this list is not exclusive).

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries
- An injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent
- Someone else (a child or adult) expresses concern about the welfare of another child
- Unexplained changes in the behaviour (e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper)

- Inappropriate sexual awareness or behaving in a sexually implicit way
- Distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected and seems to have difficulty in making friends
- Displays variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite.
- Refusal to remove clothing for normal activities or keeping covered up in warm weather
- Becomes increasingly dirty or unkempt or loses / gains weight for no apparent reason

Current sexual offences legislation classifies any sexual activity involving children under 16 years old as unlawful. The Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2009 defines specific roles and settings where sexual activity between 16 or 17 year olds and those in a position of trust, responsibility, or authority, constitutes a criminal offence. The legislation does not currently include sports roles (e.g. coaches, instructors or helpers) or sports organisation settings (e.g. clubs, leisure facilities or events) within these definitions.

Regardless of this, Scottish Handball recognises the influence that a member of staff and/or volunteer has over children and young people, and that by virtue of their role they have the capacity to influence their personal, social and sporting development.

Genuine relationships do occur, however, no intimate relationship should begin whilst the member of staff or volunteer is in a position of trust with the child or young person, regardless of whether they are both over the legal age of consent.

It is against Scottish Handball's Child Wellbeing & Protection Policy for a member of staff or volunteer who is in a position of trust to engage in sexual behaviour with a 16 or 17 year old.

10 National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2014)

Recognise

Recognising concern or becoming aware of a concern can happen in many different ways, for example:

- Direct disclosure from the child or young person
- Observation of the concern, such as a change in the behaviour, appearance, or nature of the child or young person
- Observation of the conduct of an adult towards a child
- Information that is shared from another individual or organisation e.g. an incident observed by another child or young person, or adult and reported to them

All concerns must be reported to Scottish Handball on the day the concern arises, or as soon as practically possible thereafter.

If a child or young person discloses abuse:

ALWAYS

- React calmly so as not to frighten them
- Reassure them, tell them they are not to blame and that it was right to speak up
- Take what they say seriously
- Be careful about physical contact, it may not be what the child wants
- Be honest, explain that you will have to tell someone else to help stop the alleged abuse
- Recognise that there may be inherent difficulties in interpreting what is said by someone who has a speech disability and/or differences in language
- Avoid projecting your own reactions onto the child or young person
- The safety of the child is paramount - if the child needs urgent medical attention call an ambulance, inform the doctors of the concern and ensure they are made aware that this is a child protection issue.
- Do not assume the experience was bad or painful – it may have been neutral or pleasurable for the child or young person
- Keep questions to the absolute minimum
- necessary so that there is a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said (What? Where? When? Who?)
- Record all information and what was said exactly
- Report in accordance with Scottish Handball's reporting procedures

NEVER

- Panic
- Show shock or distaste
- Rush into actions that may be inappropriate
- Make promises you cannot keep e.g. you won't tell anyone – explain that to resolve the problem it will be necessary to inform other people as appropriate.
- Speculate or make assumptions
- Approach the individual against whom the allegation has been made
- Ask more questions than are necessary for you to be sure that you need to act
- Take sole responsibility – Consult either the Club Child Wellbeing & Protection Officer or Scottish Handball's Lead Wellbeing & Protection Officer

Record

Ensuring that records are kept in relation to the concern that has been raised is a crucial aspect of responding to concerns. Recording information is to make sure that a record of what happened is established, any responses can be coordinated, and accurate advice can be sought after.

All information should be recorded in line with the following:

- | DO | DON'T |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make a written record of the information as soon as possible• Confine yourself to the facts – what you have observed/ seen, heard, or had reported to you.• Distinguish between what is your own personal knowledge and what you have been told by other people.• Be clear where you are giving either your own or others' interpretation of events and the reasons for this (e.g. context, individual's response to challenge)• Include dates, times, locations and context if available | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Include your own opinions on the matter.• Use judgmental language• Write the record in a way that protects the individual, club or Scottish Handball |

If speaking directly with a child or young person who has made direct disclosure, where appropriate, it is important to inform the child and young person why details are being recorded. It is key to get the child and young person recognise the importance of getting help and support, by doing so it will help make them more included and informed of the process that is in place.

Report

Concerns must be reported as soon as is practically possible, even if you are unsure if the information you have should be cause concern. Scottish Handball's Lead Wellbeing & Protection Officer can be contacted via the following methods:

Telephone: 07835 7925660 (office number)

Email: childprotection@scottishhandball.com

Contacting Scottish Handball can be done in a confidential manner whereby details of the parties involved can be anonymised.

If a member of Scottish Handball's Lead Wellbeing & Protection Officer is not available and an immediate response is needed then the Police and/ or Social Work must be contacted. They have a statutory duty to protect children and young people. They may already hold information relating to the concerns you are sharing and take action.

If this step is undertaken and information is shared, a record of what information was shared, what advice was received, and any actions taken must be taken and then shared with Scottish Handball's Lead Wellbeing & Protection Officer as soon as possible.

Reporting the Concern

- Scottish Handball recommend that initial contact is made via telephone or email
- If possible, Scottish Handball's Concern Recording Form (Appendix 4) should be completed and submitted to childprotection@scottishhandball.com
- Once the information has been reported, make sure that any electronic, printed or written versions of the information shared are deleted or destroyed securely. Scottish Handball will maintain a copy of the information in a secure and confidential manner.

DO NOT DELAY REPORTING THE CONCERN

Scottish Handball will support any individual who in good faith discloses information relating to a concern will receive full support of Scottish Handball. We recognise that raising concerns, allegations, or suspicions can be stressful and be of great concern to those individuals but doing so will make sure that Scottish Handball can take action to protect the wellbeing of children and young people.

Where the concern is regarding a member of Scottish Handball staff

If the concern raised relates to a member of staff, the concern must still go to Scottish Handball's Lead Wellbeing & Protection Officer. An initial assessment will be undertaken and if that assessment indicates evidence of a concern, Scottish Handball's Lead Wellbeing & Protection Officer will share information with the Chief Executive who will advise on whether Scottish Handball's Disciplinary Procedures are applied.

If the concern raised relates to Scottish Handball's Lead Wellbeing & Protection Officer, the concern must be reported to the Chief Executive.

Where the concern is about the Chief Executive, the concern must be reported to Scottish Handball's Board of Directors whereby one of the Board will take on the role and responsibilities of Lead Wellbeing & Protection Officer.

Respond

The steps below explain what actions and processes Scottish Handball's Lead Wellbeing & Protection Officer will take after a concern has been reported.

Receipt of a Concern

- Establish the basic facts and conduct an initial assessment of the facts. This will then determine the appropriate course of action.
- The appropriate course of action may differ depending on whether the concern is about the wellbeing of a child/young person or about the conduct of an adult
- A decision will be made on who should be informed of the concern, this may include the child or young person, their parent/carers, other members of Scottish Handball staff or external agencies
- Consult external agencies, such as the police and social work services, for advice. This may occur at any time through this process, if required. This is important as they may hold other important information which may add to a bigger picture regarding the concern
- All actions taken by Scottish Handball's Lead Wellbeing and Protection Officer will be recorded and dated.

Conducting the Initial Assessment

Through conducting an initial assessment, Scottish Handball will be able to establish the nature and context of the concern. It is important that this process is undertaken as guidance cannot be prescriptive for every concern.

Where the concern relates to the conduct of an adult, pending the outcome of the investigation a precautionary suspension will be considered.

The initial assessment may involve:

- Directly speak with the individual who raised the concern
- Directly speak with appropriate individuals who may have information that links to the concern

- Speak with the individual whom the concern relates to. This will only be done where the conduct does not relate to criminal behaviours and following an assessment of the nature and seriousness of the concern
- Speaking with the child or young person
- Speaking to other children or young people to establish the facts

The questioning of children should be avoided where possible. If a conversation is required with a child, consent must be obtained from the parent/carers unless that consent puts that child at risk of harm.

Speaking with children and young people must include putting Article 12 of the UNCRC at the front of concerns raised. This gives them the right to have a say on matters that affect them and have their views taken seriously. Any conversations that do take place, these must be open-ended, non-leading and only ask questions that will establish the facts. Speaking with children and young people should never take place if there is a suggestion that the concern relates to a criminal offence unless advice has been sought from the Police.

Fairness and Natural Justice

Where an investigation is carried out into the conduct of an adult, all actions and steps undertaken will be influenced by the principles of natural justice:

- They will be made aware of the nature of the concern
- They will have the opportunity to put forward a response and their case
- Scottish Handball will act in good faith to ensure that the matter is dealt with in a timely manner and with impartiality

Concluding the Initial Assessment

Concluding initial assessments and making decisions on concerns will depend on whether the concern relates to a child or young person's wellbeing or the conduct of an adult and thereby this will result in possible different conclusion and decision made. Where the concern relates to both a child's wellbeing and the conduct of an adult, both conclusions must be considered.

A Concern about a Child/Young Person's Wellbeing (after the initial assessment)

- The facts do not substantiate the concern and therefore no further action will be taken
- The concern has been successfully addressed by the child or young person, their parent/carer and/or Scottish Handball and therefore no further action is needed
- The concern has not been successfully addressed and further support is needed for the child or young person
- Information should be shared with statutory services, for example Police Scotland or the Social Work Department
- Information should be shared with the child's Named Person, if applicable, for consideration

Sharing Concerns with Parents/Carers

Scottish Handball is committed to working parents/carers whenever there are concerns about a child or young person. Parents/carers have the primary responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of their children.

Common sense is advised in these situations and the best interests of the child will be considered as to what is the best support for them and they will be asked who should be informed. If appropriate, consent gained from the child or young person before their parents/carers are notified.

Where there are concerns that the parents/carers may be responsible for or have knowledge of the abuse, sharing concerns with the parents/carers may place the child or young person at further risk. If this is the case, advice must be sought from statutory agencies who will decide who is best placed to inform the parents/carers.

Sharing Information with Statutory Services

Where the concern about a child or young person's wellbeing suggests that a criminal offence has been committed or they need immediate protection, the concern must be reported to the police and/or social work services.

The police and local authority have a statutory duty of care for all children.

Consideration must be given to obtaining consent from the child/young person, their parents/ carers and or Named Person before sharing this information.

A concern about the conduct of an adult (after the initial assessment)

- The facts do not substantiate the concern and therefore no further action will be taken
- Information supports concern about poor practice
- information with a member club or organisation in terms of a Data Sharing Agreement.
- Information supports concern about serious poor practice and/or misconduct
- Information supports concern about possible criminal behaviour

In all cases consideration should be given as to what support, if any, is required for the child or young person and whether there is a need to share.

Poor Practice

Where poor practice is identified, the following decisions must be considered:

- No further action required e.g. the adult has recognised that their conduct was inappropriate and has already taken steps to ensure it does not occur again
- Informal discussion
- Formal discussion, with a record being retained
- Further training and support required, with a record being retained
- Scottish Handball's Disciplinary Procedures are enacted

Where the concern relates to a Scottish Handball member of staff or volunteer, their line manager will carry out any further investigations as necessary and take appropriate action depending on the nature and seriousness of the conduct.

Poor Practice/Misconduct

Where significant/repeated poor practice or misconduct is identified, the following decisions must be considered:

- Further training and support
- Scottish Handball's Disciplinary Procedures are enacted
- Formal warning
- Dismissal
- Referral to Disclosure Scotland, where the adult was in regulated work with children and young people and the legal criteria for referral is met

Criminal Behaviour & Activity

Where criminal behaviour or activity has been identified, the following decisions must be made:

- Report the concern to the police as soon as possible
- Provide any supporting information, making a written record of the name of the police officer to whom the concerns were passed to together with the crime reference number, time and date of the call
- If requested by the Police, provide a copy of the Concern Recording Form (Appendix 4)
- Follow the advice of the police on:
 - Inform the parents/carers of the child involved unless advised not to
 - Inform the child's Named Person (if applicable) unless advised not to

In the interests of fairness and natural justice, advice must be obtained from the police about informing the adult involved in the concerns. If the advice is to inform them, they must only be told that information has been received which relates to them and may suggest an allegation of a criminal offence.

As the matter will be sub judice (i.e. under judicial consideration) no details will be given unless advised to do so by the police. All actions must ensure the best evidence is preserved for any criminal proceedings while at the same time safeguarding the rights of that adult.

The outcomes following the above could involve:

- Police investigation — may involve a child protection investigation jointly by police and social work services
- Criminal proceedings
- Civil proceedings (by the child/family who raised the concern)
- Disciplinary Hearing
- Referral to Disclosure Scotland, where the adult was in regulated work with children and young people and the legal criteria for referral is met

Referral to Disclosure Scotland

Following the outcome of the investigation and depending on the nature of the concern, Scottish Handball may need to make a referral, in law, to Disclosure Scotland. This is in relation to an individual who is a member of the PVG Scheme and involved in working with children and young people in regulated work.

The criteria that must be met before a referral can take place is as follows. If an individual through their work with children and young people has:

- harmed a child
- placed a child at risk of harm
- engaged in inappropriate conduct involving pornography
- engaged in inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature involving a child, or
- given inappropriate medical treatment to a child.

AND as a result, Scottish Handball has taken or would have taken one of the following options:

1. Scottish Handball has dismissed individual or
2. The individual would have been dismissed as a result of the incident had they not resigned, retired or been made redundant; or
3. Scottish Handball has transferred individual to a position which is not regulated work with children; or
4. The individual would have been dismissed or considered for dismissal where employment or volunteer role was not due to end at the expiry of a fixed term contract; or
5. The individual would have been dismissed or considered for dismissal had the contract not expired.

Scottish Handball will also make a referral to Disclosure Scotland should information become available after that individual has:

- Been dismissed by Scottish Handball or
- Resigned, retired, or been made redundant; or
- Been transferred to another position in Scottish Handball which is not regulated work with children.

Scottish Handball receiving information from Disclosure Scotland

If Disclosure Scotland notifies Scottish Handball that an individual is being considered for listing that individual will be precautionary suspended in line with this Policy and Scottish Handball's Articles of Association until the outcome of the case has been established.

Precautionary suspension is not a form of disciplinary action and does not involve pre-judgment. In all cases of suspension, the best interests and wellbeing of children and young people will be the paramount consideration.

If Disclosure Scotland informs Scottish Handball that an individual is barred, that individual will be removed permanently from regulated work with children immediately in line with the Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020.

Outcome & Possible Sanctions

Precautionary Suspensions

Scottish Handball may suspend, on a precautionary basis, an individual whilst an investigation is carried out. This form of suspension is not a form of disciplinary action but may be carried out where, for example, the concern indicates criminal behaviour or serious poor practice. These suspensions will be undertaken in line with this policy Scottish Handball's Articles of Association

For members of Scottish Handball staff, suspension will be carried out in accordance with the Scottish Handball's HR Procedures, including written notification of the suspension to the member of staff.

Criminal Proceedings

An ongoing criminal investigation does not necessarily rule out disciplinary action Scottish or investigation by Scottish Handball's Lead Wellbeing & Protection Officer. If action is taken, advice will be taken from the police to ensure that the action(s) taken will not jeopardise the criminal investigation.

In any event, once criminal proceedings have concluded Scottish Handball will consider the matter and the outcomes in line with this procedure.

False or Malicious Allegations

Should, in exceptional circumstances, Scottish Handball establish that an allegation or concern raised is false or malicious, it will:

- Make sure that the individual involved receives an account of the circumstances and/or investigation and a letter confirming the conclusion of the matter. They may wish to seek legal advice.
- Keep all records and circumstances regarding the investigation confidentially
- Take all reasonable steps to support the individual
- Review the participation or continued involvement in Scottish Handball activities of the individual who made the false or malicious allegation.

- If the false or malicious allegation has been made by a child or young person, it will only be appropriate to have a discussion with the child or young person to determine their views and opinions with parental/carer permission
- Destroy any data collected for the investigation in accordance with current data protection legislation

Allegations of Non-Recent Abuse

Scottish Handball understands and recognises that sharing personal experience of abuse can be a difficult process for someone to follow. It is a challenging and sensitive experience. Scottish Handball will listen to any allegations of abuse that may be made some time after the event e.g., an adult who was abused as a child by someone who is still currently working with children.

Where non-recent allegations of abuse are raised with Scottish Handball, these procedures will be followed which also includes the duty to refer to Disclosure Scotland.

Case Review Procedure

1. Setting out the Purpose

Cases reviews allow organisations to understand any lessons that can be learnt from the way a concern was investigated and handled. It allows for changes and recommendations to be established so that improvements can be made. Scottish Handball will be able to consider the following when conducting a case review:

- How the Responding to Concerns Procedure was implemented
- The effectiveness of the Responding to Concerns Procedure
- Informing policy and improving practice with regards to wellbeing & protection matters

2. Deciding to Conduct a Review

The following criteria has been established to set out the considerations Scottish Handball will make when establishing if a case requires a review:

3. The harm or risk of harm to a child was high; and/or
4. Views expressed by those involved in the case have raised concern about the way it was handled; and/or
5. There was a clear failure of procedure in handling the case: and/or
6. The case concerned an unusual practice or behaviour; and/or
7. The case took a significantly long period of time to resolve; and/or
8. The Chief Executive and/or Scottish Handball Board decides a review is appropriate.

A case that is identified for review may relate to a particular concern or matter or, in some cases, may be cumulative concerns.

Scottish Handball's Lead Wellbeing and Protection Officer may, internally, from time to time take a sample of cases to review. This is to look at and ensure the level of service provided in case management is consistent and to highlight any learning.

This may be in conjunction with sportscotland/Children1st.

3. Appointing a Case Reviewer (Internal/External)

Scottish Handball's Board of Directors will be responsible for appointing a case reviewer. In appointing a case reviewer, it must be considered if they will be appointed internally or externally from Scottish Handball. The decision will have to consider if the skills and expertise are available internally or externally. The skills and expertise for a case review will vary according to each defined case and this will be considered when agreeing the role of the case reviewed.

Externally Appointed Case Reviewer

The following criteria will be considered when deciding whether the case review should be external to Scottish Handball:

- Are the recommendations likely to influence and/or change practice across the whole of Scottish Handball?
- Was the risk of harm to the child high?
- Is there a lack of experience and knowledge internally regarding the nature of the case?
- Does senior management consider that the facts and circumstances of the case require a case reviewer from a more senior level?
- Has the Board/Chief Executive expressed a preference towards an external reviewer as being more appropriate?

Where the answer is yes to one or more of the criteria above, a presumption will be made that Scottish Handball's Board of Directors will appoint an external case reviewer.

Scottish Handball will continue to have an overview of the review and will set out clear expectations in respect of timescales, milestones, and deadlines (Section 4). However, Scottish Handball will not have any input into the findings or recommendation of the review.

Consideration will be given to any formal contractual arrangements required when appointing an external case reviewer. Scottish Handball will also consider whether appropriate legal advice should be sought, and which agencies could enter into the arrangements (if any). When drawing up a contract, it will cover timescales, fees and confidentiality including data protection.

Internally Appointed Case Reviewer

Where a case reviewer is appointed internally, they will be selected from Scottish Handball's staff depending on the suitability of that individual, their experience and knowledge. Scottish Handball notes that given the size and staffing constraints of the Association that an internally appointed case reviewer is unlikely. Where one is appointed however, the following will be considered:

- The Lead Wellbeing & Protection Officer will review a concern responded to by a member of Scottish Handball staff
- The Chief Executive will review a concern responded to by the Lead Wellbeing & Protection Officer
- The Board Lead for Safeguarding will review a concern responded to by the Chief Executive.

If the case to be reviewed has been joint managed, the case review will be conducted by the Chief Executive or an external reviewer.

A case will not be reviewed by any individual who had an involvement in the concern or incident, either as a named individual or witness, in the matter of concern.

4. Timescales

Case reviews should be conducted as quickly as is feasible with an 8-week timeframe from the point of appointment of a case reviewer and all correspondence and evidence relating to the case has been collected.

The 8-week timeframe is open to change. Given that circumstances vary between each case, this 8-week time frame may need to be extended or a longer time frame established from the start of the review. Where a longer timeframe is required or an extension is needed during a case review, the report and explanation must be submitted for approval by:

- Scottish Handball's Board of Directors

5. First Considerations of a Review

Following the appointment of a case reviewer, they will need to consider the following:

1. Is there still ongoing police and/or social work investigation?
2. Is there still an ongoing criminal investigation by the Police?
3. Are there any legal proceedings that relate to the case that are ongoing?

If the answer to any of the above questions is yes, the case review cannot go ahead until any and all of the above have concluded.

After steps 1 - 5 have been completed, Scottish Handball's Case Review Template (Appendix 5) can be utilised to detail and document the remit and reasons for the case review. This will allow for clear parameters to be set out for the review and provide a reference point throughout the case review to ensure the case reviewer considers the appropriate areas of the case and stays within the case review's remit.

6. Following Considerations

After it has been decided that a case review can go ahead, consideration will need to be given to how people may feel or respond to the case being reviewed and what impact this could have. People may be concerned that their actions will be scrutinised and criticised, but it is important that the parameters of the review are set out at the start and what it is set out to achieve to manage those concerns and expectations.

Case reviews are not undertaken to reopen concerns or reinvestigate them. Only the evidence and correspondence that relates to the concern will be considered but there may be times where contact will be made with those who were involved in the concern to obtain comments or opinions on the case. Where contact is made with those involved in the concern, setting the goals of the review are crucial, for example:

"I've been asked by Scottish Handball to review how the governing body dealt with the concerns about XXXXX. This review will consider whether appropriate action was taken to protect those involved and how procedures were followed. It is my understand that you had an involvement in this case, but I would like to set out that this review is in place to..."

Throughout, the case reviewer will make a record of the review and their findings. Although in some situations a full in-depth report may be required and submitted, the report in a whole should contain the following information:

- The source of the concern
- The nature of the concern
- A chronology of events
- A list of individuals and organisations involved
- Any action taken at the time
- An analysis of the key issues or matters linked to the aims of the review
- Any other relevant points or observations
- Lessons to be learned and changes to be made
- Recommendations

7. Establishing the Facts, Chronology and Roles

To help the case reviewer and their understanding of what happened, who was involved and when, it is crucial to set out the sequence of events as they happened. For example:

Date	Event
01 June 2024	A child discloses emotional abuse to their CWPO
01 June 2024	CWPO reports the concerns to Scottish Handball's Lead Wellbeing & Protection Officer
03 June 2024	Concern acknowledged by Lead Wellbeing & Protection Officer
03 June 2024	Lead Wellbeing & Protection Officer contacted the local Social Work team for advice
03 June 2024	Lead Wellbeing & Protection Officer liaised with CWPO to discuss appropriate support for the child and club

8. Identifying Key Questions & Aims of the Review

Once the chronology of events has been established, this will allow the case reviewer to identify any questions that need to be asked and then give them the ability to start to source and collate the relevant information required to answer those questions.

Should the case reviewer, through establishing events, roles and facts relating to the concern identify that a child or young person is still at risk of harm despite action being taken during the case or it is established the risk has come from a failure to act, the case reviewer should be ready and prepared to act.

ANY URGENT CONCERNS, ACTIONS OR ISSUES THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED MUST BE IMMEDIATELY ADDRESSED WITHOUT WAITING FOR THE REVIEW TO CONCLUDE.

9. Establishing any Relevant Observations/Points

Relevant areas and wider issues for consideration by the case reviewer may include the following:

People

- Were the right people involved?
- Were the views of the child/family obtained?
- Were those involved aware of the procedures?
- Had the people involved been trained?
- Where appropriate, were external organisations involved; for example, the police?

Outcomes

- Was the outcome appropriate in the case?
 - If not, why not?
- Is there a need to take further action in this case; for example,
 - referring the case to police/social work?
- Were the right people told the right things about the outcome?

Procedures

- Were the relevant procedures followed?
 - If not, is there a reasonable explanation for this?
- Were the timescales appropriate?
- Do the current procedures provide adequate information about what to do?
- If appropriate, was a referral made to Disclosure Scotland as required by law?

Recording

- Were records kept?
- Is the quality of the information recorded satisfactory?
- Can the forms be improved?

10. Identify Lessons to be Learned, Changes Required and Recommendations

Once the case reviewer has followed this procedure, they will be at a point where they can establish and missed opportunities or gaps within Scottish Handball. This will inform the recommendations that will be included within their report, which they may choose to prioritise.

The recommendations that they establish could range from directing those involved towards training and education to a change in procedure. This will be left to the discretion of the case reviewer who, using the information and understanding obtained from the case review, will be best placed to decide.

11. Respond to the Findings

The report and its recommendations will be reported to the Chief Executive who will consult with the Board of Scottish Handball. The report must not contain any information or details that relate to the case so that the privacy of the children and young people involved is protected along with any others. The report must outline the recommendations that are to be put forward.

Scottish Handball's Lead Wellbeing & Protection Officer will respond to the findings of the report, its recommendations and how to advise and support others who are involved in the review. Where it is established that recommendations are to be implemented and followed, the Board and the Chief Executive will establish the following which must be communicated to those who have been identified as being involved in the case:

- Which recommendations are to be prioritised
- What action is required for each recommendation
- Who will lead on the implementation of the recommendations
- What the timescales are for implementation

Where a decision has been made not to follow a recommendation, this decision and the reasons why shall clearly be recorded. The Chief Executive will consider if the decisions not to implement need to be communicated and who needs to be informed.

GIVE THE NATURE OF THE CASE REVIEW, MANY DETAILS WILL BE CONFIDENTIAL. ANY INFORMATION SHARED WILL BE PRESENTED IN A WAY TO PROTECT THE PRIVACY AND ANONYMITY OF THE PARTIES INVOLVED.