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Foreword

Badminton can and does have a very powerful and positive influence on people – especially young people. Not only can it provide opportunities for enjoyment and achievement; it can also develop valuable qualities such as self-esteem, leadership and teamwork. These positive effects can only take place if Badminton is in the right hands – in the hands of those who place the welfare of all young people first and adopt practices that support, protect and empower them.

The reality is that abuse does take place in sport and in some cases coaches and other trusted adults in sport have been convicted of abusing children. BADMINTON England recognises that despite all the benefits of participation, sport can provide easy access to children and present opportunities for an individual who wants to harm children. BADMINTON England accepts that the welfare and safety of young people and vulnerable adults is the responsibility of everyone, whether working in a professional or voluntary capacity. Every adult has a legal and moral responsibility to protect young people from abuse when involved in Badminton.

Most young people and vulnerable adults do in fact enjoy a positive sporting experience, are well cared for and do have a happy and trusting relationship with adults. However, there are those who are less fortunate and have suffered abuse be it physical, emotional, sexual or neglect. This abuse may occur in the sporting environment and it is known that perpetrators of abuse actively seek employment with children or volunteer to work with children in order to harm them.

Whilst it is recognise that child abuse is a very emotive and sensitive subject, BADMINTON England acknowledges that it has a duty of care towards young people and vulnerable adults and is committed to providing information & training opportunities to ensure that those working with these groups adopt best practice, to ensure the safety & welfare of those taking part in Badminton. Adopting best practice will help to safeguard these participants from potential abuse as well as protecting coaches and other adult leaders in positions of responsibility from potential false allegations of abuse. The BADMINTON England Child Protection Policy and Implementation Plan will allow young people and vulnerable adults to excel in a safe environment and will send a reassuring signal to parents that will positively impact on increasing participation.

This document is binding for the whole game of Badminton and provides guidelines to everyone involved in the sport, in whatever capacity, whether paid or unpaid.

BADMINTON England's approach to child protection is based on the principles recognised within the UK and International legislation and Government guidance. The following has been taken into consideration:

- ❖ The Children Act 1989
- ❖ The Protection of Children Act 1999
- ❖ Working together to Safeguard Children and Young People 1999
- ❖ The Human Rights Act 1998
- ❖ United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Acknowledgements

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CHAPTER ONE: Policy Statement

1.1 Responsibilities

BADMINTON England, its Members, Partners and other affiliate organisations will:

- ❖ accept the moral and legal responsibility to implement procedures to provide a duty of care for young people, safeguard their well-being and protect them from abuse
- ❖ respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of young people and vulnerable adults
- ❖ recruit, train and supervise its employees and volunteers so as to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect young people from abuse and themselves against allegations
- ❖ require staff/volunteers to adopt and abide by the BADMINTON England Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct and the Child Protection Policy and Procedures
- ❖ respond to all incidents of suspicious poor practice and allegations of abuse swiftly and appropriately.

1.2 Principles

The guidance given in the procedures is based on the following principles:

- ❖ **the welfare of young people and vulnerable adults is paramount**
- ❖ this policy recognises and builds on the legal and statutory definitions of a child
- ❖ the distinction between ages of consent, civil and criminal liability are recognised but in the pursuit of good practice in the delivery and management of Badminton, a young person is recognised as being under the age of 18 years (Children's Act 1989 definition)
- ❖ an adult has a moral and statutory duty for the care, custody and control of any child under the age of 18 under their supervision.
- ❖ all young people, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse
- ❖ all incidents of poor practice or suspicions of poor practice and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- ❖ all young people have a right to play the game of Badminton in an enjoyable and safe climate
- ❖ young players have a right to expect appropriate management, support, personal and social development with regard to their involvement in Badminton, regardless of their level of performance
- ❖ it is the responsibility of the child protection experts to determine whether or not abuse has taken place but it is everyone's responsibility to report any concerns
- ❖ confidentiality should be upheld in line with the Data Protection Act 1984 and the Human Rights Act 2000

Working in partnership with young people, their parents and other agencies is essential for the protection of young people. Despite the acknowledged statutory responsibility of the Social Services department to ensure the welfare of young people and the work with the local Area Safeguarding Boards to comply with its procedures, child protection has a broader remit within Badminton. All those involved in the management of young players in Badminton have a duty to uphold the principles of this policy.

It is not the responsibility of anyone working for BADMINTON England or affiliated organisations in any capacity, whether paid or voluntary, to decide whether or not child abuse is taking place or to investigate it. It is the responsibility of everyone in Badminton, however, to ensure that action is taken to ensure that a child is protected appropriately.

1.3 Implementation Plan

The purpose of BADMINTON England's Child Protection Implementation Plan is to safeguard the welfare of the participants in the game. The Plan sets out how BADMINTON England will work towards the *Standards for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport* developed by the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit and endorsed by Sport England and the Sport's Minister. For more information about the standards go to: www.thecpsu.org.uk

1.4 Assent

All individuals involved in Badminton in England at every level be it player, coach, administrator, club and county officials, linesmen and referees agree to abide by the BADMINTON England Child Protection Policy following its endorsement by the Council of BADMINTON England in April 2005.

The policy is widely available and is printed in the BADMINTON England Handbook, which goes to every affiliated club. BADMINTON England have introduced a club accreditation scheme (BADMINTON England Silver Mark). An element embedded in this scheme requires the club to comply with the BADMINTON England Child Protection Policy. BADMINTON England is a registered body with the Criminal Records Bureau and facilitates a disclosure service on behalf of clubs and employers to prevent unsuitable people from working with the game. Currently BADMINTON England maintains confidential records of all complaints, concerns and sanctions any clubs and members. The Coaching Department plans to introduce CRB checks for all coaches undertaking a BADMINTON England NGB coaching award from 2005

1.5 Monitoring Procedures

BADMINTON England's Child Protection policy and procedures will be regularly monitored and a full policy review will take place every 3 years. However the following situations may also evoke a review of the policy:

- ❖ as a result of any changes in legislation
- ❖ as a result of any changes in governance of the game
- ❖ following a procedural review as a result of a significant case

Important

*Please note that the term **parents** is used throughout this document as a generic term to represent parents, carers and guardians.*

*Please note that the term **young people** also refers to players with disabilities and vulnerable adults.*

CHAPTER TWO: Recruitment, Employment / Deployment of Staff and Volunteers

2.1 Introduction

Anyone may have the potential to abuse young people; therefore all reasonable steps must be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with them in badminton. A consistent approach needs to be adopted for all persons with substantial access to young people/vulnerable adults whether they are paid or unpaid, full- or part-time. Under the Protection of Children Act 1999, all individuals working on behalf of, or otherwise representing an organisation are treated as employees whether working in a paid or voluntary capacity.

2.2 Pre-recruitment Checks

The following pre-recruitment checks should always be carried out:

2.2.1 Advertising

If any form of advertising is used to recruit staff, it should reflect the:

- ❖ aims of the badminton organisation and where appropriate, the particular badminton programme
- ❖ key responsibilities of the role
- ❖ level of experience or qualifications required (e.g. experience of working with children is an advantage)
- ❖ the organisation's open and positive stance on child protection and equal opportunities

2.2.2 Pre-Application Information

Pre-application information sent to interested or potential applicants should contain:

- ❖ a job description including roles and responsibilities
- ❖ a person specification – (e.g. stating qualifications or experience required)
- ❖ an Application Form
- ❖ a self disclosure form (to allow any questions resulting from information given to be clarified at interview)

2.2.3 Applications

All applicants whether for paid or voluntary, full or part-time positions should complete an application form, which should elicit the following information. (For example see Template 1)

- ❖ name, address, telephone number, email contact and National Insurance Number (to confirm identity and right to work)
- ❖ relevant validated experience and qualifications
- ❖ listing of past career or involvement in badminton (to confirm experience and identify any gaps)
- ❖ any criminal record
- ❖ whether they are known to any social services department as being an actual or potential risk to children or young people, a self disclosure question to establish whether they have ever had action taken against them in relation to child abuse, sexual offences or violence
- ❖ the names of at least two people (not relatives) willing to provide written references that comment on the applicant's previous experience of and suitability for working with children and young people (previous employer)
- ❖ their consent to criminal records checks being undertaken
- ❖ a signed agreement to abide by the BADMINTON England Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct, and club policies where appropriate to the position sought (e.g. coach, official etc)

NB If an applicant has no experience of working with young people, training is strongly recommended.

The application form should also state that failure to disclose information, or to provide false or misleading information, or subsequent failure to conform to the Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct will result in disciplinary action and possible exclusion from BADMINTON England. The 'Code' is provided in the Appendix D.

2.3 Checks and References

The Government has established the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and introduced a process whereby organisations providing opportunities or services for children and vulnerable adults can access information to assist in recruitment decisions. BADMINTON England requires all persons applying for positions that include working with children and young people to undertake a CRB Disclosure. The BADMINTON England CRB process is confidential and no information contained on Disclosure certificates will be made available to clubs, counties or any BADMINTON England departments.

2.3.1 References

At least two written references should be taken up – at least one should be associated with former work with children/young people. If an applicant has no experience of working with children, training is strongly recommended. Written references should always be followed up and confirmed by phone.

2.3.2 Self Disclosure

The self-disclosure form currently used as part of the BADMINTON England Coaching Register will remain available to volunteers who work indirectly with young persons, in situations where the application for a CRB is not possible within reason, e.g. a one off event. The self-disclosure form is not a substitute for a CRB Disclosure, and BADMINTON England strongly recommend that clubs request disclosures from all volunteers who have direct *and* indirect access to young people.

2.4 Interviews and Induction

A formal interview and induction period is always required for positions involving working with young people. The interview should be carried out according to acceptable protocol and recommendations.

2.4.1 Interview

All those with direct access to young people will be required to complete a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure (see Appendix E). All other applicants (i.e. club volunteers and employees) who have not been required to complete a CRB Disclosure because they do not have direct access to young people will be required to complete a self-disclosure form (See Template 2) The CRB Disclosure and the self-disclosure form must be completed once every three years.

The successful applicant will only be allowed to take up his/her full duties once the BADMINTON England Child Protection Officer has cleared their CRB check and the appointing BADMINTON England agency has received two satisfactory references.

2.4.2 Induction

All staff employed, paid or voluntary, will undergo a formal or informal induction in which:

- ❖ their coaching or tournament administration qualifications are substantiated
- ❖ they sign up to the Badminton Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct and are advised that they may face disciplinary action if there is an allegation that the Code has been broken

- ❖ the expectations, roles and responsibilities of the job are clarified (e.g. through a formal or informal work programme or goal-setting exercise)
- ❖ child protection policy and implementation procedures are explained and training needs established
- ❖ when possible the new recruit should be mentored by an experienced person

2.5 Training

BADMINTON England recognises that checks are only part of the process to protect children from possible abuse. Appropriate training will enable individuals to recognise their responsibilities with regard to their own good practice and the reporting of suspected poor practice/concerns of possible abuse.

BADMINTON England recommends that all staff working with children must ensure that they have received child protection training appropriate to their role. BADMINTON England will ensure that staff have access to a full range of child protection training opportunities.

For further details of child protection training opportunities see Appendix K.

2.6 Monitoring and Appraisal

At regular intervals (or following a particular programme), all staff or volunteers should be given the opportunity to receive formal (e.g. through an appraisal) or informal feedback, to identify training needs and set new goals. Managers should be sensitive to any concerns about poor practice or abuse and act on them at an early stage. They should also offer appropriate support, through liaison with the BADMINTON England Child Protection Officer, to those who report concerns/complaints.

2.7 Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures

Clubs should put in place a procedure to deal with complaints. Parents and all club members should be made aware of the procedures for raising a complaint or concern. Provision should be made in the rules or constitution to allow complaints and disciplinary procedures to be implemented. Badminton organisations should ensure that parents and young people are aware of the existence of these procedures.

Good advice on general recruitment, interview techniques and good practice is contained in the Running Sport publication **Employment Matters** and the publication **Investing in Coaches – A Guide to Local Coaching Development** (both available from Coachwise Ltd on 0113 231 1310)

CHAPTER THREE: Promoting Good Practice with Young People

3.1 Introduction

Child abuse, particularly sexual abuse, can arouse strong emotions in those facing such a situation. It is important to understand these feelings and not allow them to interfere with your judgement about any action to take. Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school and the sporting environment. Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with young people in order to harm them. A coach, instructor, teacher, official or volunteer may have regular contact with young people and be an important link in identifying cases where a young person needs protection. All suspicious cases of poor practice should be reported to BADMINTON England following the guidelines in this document. When a young person enters the club having been subjected to child abuse outside the sporting environment, sport can play a crucial role in improving the young person's self esteem. In such cases the club must work with the appropriate agencies to ensure the young person receives the required support.

3.2 Good Practice Guidelines

All personnel in Badminton should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect children and to protect themselves from allegations. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive Badminton culture and climate (e.g. coach/adult protection as well as child protection):

- ❖ always work within BADMINTON England's Code of Ethics and Conduct.
- ❖ always working in an open environment (e.g. avoid private or unobserved situations). Encourage an open environment (e.g. no secrets)
- ❖ adults working with children and young people should never work in isolation
- ❖ treating all young people/vulnerable adults equally, and with respect and dignity
- ❖ always putting the welfare of each young person first, before winning or achieving goals
- ❖ maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with performers (e.g. it is not appropriate to have an intimate relationship with a child or to share a room with them)
- ❖ building balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children to share in the decision making process
- ❖ making Badminton fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play
- ❖ encouraging parents to ask questions and giving information to parents and young people
- ❖ ensuring that if any form of manual/physical support is required, it should be provided openly and according to guidelines provided by BADMINTON England. (Guidance is currently given verbally on Coach Education courses, and written guidance about coaching techniques is also available from the Coaching Department). Care is needed, as it is difficult to maintain hand positions when the child is constantly moving. Young people should always be consulted and their agreement gained, prior to any physical assistance being given. Some parents are becoming increasingly sensitive about manual support and their views should always be carefully considered. Consent forms should be signed by all parents/carers and young people at the beginning of each year/season
- ❖ keeping up to date with the technical skills, qualifications and insurance in Badminton
- ❖ involving parents/carers wherever possible (e.g. for the responsibility of their children in the changing rooms). If groups have to be supervised in the changing rooms, always ensure parents/teachers/coaches/officials work in pairs
- ❖ adult staff should never change or shower at the same time using the same facility as players
- ❖ ensure that consent for medical treatment is gained at the start of each year/season. It is illegal to give medical treatment to a child or young person without written medical consent

- ❖ if your club has players with disabilities involve them and their carers in deciding how they can be assisted and supported and gain their consent for this
- ❖ ensuring that if mixed teams are taken away to play, a male and female member of staff should always accompany them. (NB However, same gender abuse can also occur)
- ❖ ensuring that at tournaments or residential, adults should not enter children's rooms or invite children into their rooms. If it is necessary for an adult working in a supervisory capacity to enter a child's room, they should be accompanied by another adult
- ❖ being an excellent role model – this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people and promoting a healthy diet
- ❖ giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism, sarcasm, humiliating comments
- ❖ recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people and vulnerable adults and avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will
- ❖ securing parental consent in writing to acting in *loco parentis*, if the need arises to give permission for the administration of emergency first aid/or other medical treatment
- ❖ keeping written records of any injury or incidents that occur, along with the details of any treatment given. Where staff witness an injury this must be reported to the parents at the first opportunity

3.2.1 Practice never to be sanctioned

The following should **never** be sanctioned. You should never:

- ❖ engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- ❖ share a room with a young person
- ❖ allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- ❖ reduce a child to tears as a form of control
- ❖ use inappropriate language or allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- ❖ display inappropriate social behaviour, such as drug taking, smoking or drinking alcohol irresponsibly
- ❖ make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- ❖ fail to act upon allegations made by a child or young person (Always follow the guidance given in this document) do things of a personal nature for children or vulnerable adults, that they can do for themselves
- ❖ invite or allow children to stay with you or visit you at your home unsupervised.

N.B. It may sometimes be necessary for staff or volunteers to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are young or are disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parents and the players involved. There is a need to be responsive to a person's reactions. If a person is fully dependent on you, talk with him/her about what you are doing and give choices where possible. This is particularly so if you are involved in any dressing or undressing of outer clothing, or where there is physical contact, lifting or assisting a child to carry out particular activities. Avoid taking on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained.

If any of the following should occur, you should report them immediately to an appropriate colleague. Make a record of the incident and ensure that the child's parents/carers are informed of the incident:

- ❖ if you accidentally hurt a player
- ❖ if he/she seems distressed in any manner
- ❖ if a player appears to be sexually aroused by your actions
- ❖ if a player misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.

3.2.2 Practice to be avoided

The following actions and practices should be **avoided** except in emergencies.

- ❖ avoid spending time alone with children away from others.
- ❖ avoid taking children to your home where they will be alone with you.
- ❖ transporting players potentially places children at risk of abuse and should be avoided. (For guidance about transport see Appendix H).

If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable they should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge in the organisation or the child's parents (e.g. if a child sustains an injury and needs to go to hospital, or a parent fails to arrive to pick a child up at the end of a session).

3.3 BADMINTON England Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct

The Government guidance, *Caring for the Young and Vulnerable? Guidance for preventing abuse of trust*, 1999 states:

"The inequality at the heart of a relationship of trust should be ended before any sexual relationship begins".

This statement recognises that genuine relationships do occur between the different levels of volunteers and participants in a group but that no intimate relationship should begin whilst the member of staff or volunteer is in a 'position of trust' over them. The power and influence that an older member of staff has over someone attending a group or activity cannot be underestimated. If there is an additional competitive aspect to the activity and the older person is responsible for the young person's successor failure to some extent, then the dependency of the younger member upon the older will be increased. It is therefore vital for volunteers to recognise the responsibility they must exercise in ensuring that they do not abuse their positions of trust. Young people aged 16-18 can legally consent to some types of sexual activity, however, in some provisions of legislation they are classified as children.

If anyone engages in an intimate or inappropriate relationship with a young person it is a breach of the BADMINTON England Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct. Badminton coaches are currently required to sign up to the BADMINTON England Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct (see Appendix D), which are issued through every affiliated senior and junior club. The Code encourages:

- ❖ the development of an open and positive climate in badminton
- ❖ poor practice to be identified
- ❖ investigations to be carried out
- ❖ disciplinary action to be taken if appropriate.

The government is currently undertaking a consultation process to consider whether coaches should be included within the jurisdiction of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 relating to relationships of trust. In certain circumstances the "abuse of trust" is a criminal offence.

3.4 Guidelines for Use of Photographic Filming Equipment

There is evidence that some people have used sporting events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young and disabled sportspeople in vulnerable positions. BADMINTON England advises that all badminton organisations adhere to the appropriate guidelines detailed in the appendices. These guidelines have been adapted from England Squash and are reproduced with their kind permission. A BADMINTON England Policy Statement and guidelines can be found in Appendixes F and G and Template 3.

CHAPTER FOUR: Recognition of Poor Practice, Abuse and Bullying

4.1 Introduction

Child abuse can and does occur outside the family setting. 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. The staff and volunteers in badminton, whether in a paid or voluntary capacity, are not experts at such recognition. However they do have a responsibility to act if they have any concerns about the behaviour of someone (an adult or another child) towards a young person and to follow the procedures in this document. Badminton organisations should therefore encourage and expect staff to discuss any concern they may have about the welfare of a person immediately with the designated person - this might be the Welfare Officer, chairperson, president, team manager, official or coach.

4.2 Poor Practice

Poor practice may be defined as any action or behaviour that contravenes the following:

- ❖ best coaching practice as advocated through the BADMINTON England coach education programme or resource materials
- ❖ the BADMINTON England Code of Conduct or Code of Ethics
- ❖ the BADMINTON England Equity Policy
- ❖ the accepted roles and responsibilities of a coach
- ❖ the BADMINTON England Child Protection Policy and Health, Safety and Welfare Policy

4.3 Abuse

Abuse can and does occur in a wide range of settings, including sport and can happen wherever there are young people. The effects of abuse can be so damaging and if untreated, they may impact upon a person into adulthood. For example, a person who has been abused as a child may find it difficult or impossible to maintain stable, trusting relationships, they may become involved with drugs or prostitution, attempt suicide or even abuse a young person in the future.

4.3.1 Disabled People

There have been a number of studies, which suggest children and/or adults with disabilities are at an increased risk of abuse. Various factors contribute to this, such as stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, isolation and a powerlessness to protect themselves, or adequately communicate that abuse has occurred.

4.3.2 Race and racism

Young people from ethnic groups (and their parents) are likely to have experienced harassment, racial discrimination and institutional racism. Although racism causes significant harm it is not, in itself, a category of abuse. BADMINTON England is committed to tackling racism and oppressive or discriminatory practice within Badminton.

4.3.3 Neglect and abuse

Somebody may abuse or neglect a young person by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Young people may be abused in family setting or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely by a stranger.

4.3.3.1 Neglect

Neglect occurs where adults fail to meet a young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs likely to result in the serious impairment of the young person's health or development. (e.g.

failure to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a young person from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.) It may also include refusal to give young people love, affection and attention. Neglect in Badminton could include a teacher or coach not ensuring young people were safe, exposing them to undue cold or to unnecessary risk of injury.

4.3.3.2 Physical abuse

Where adults (both male and female) physically hurt or injure young people by hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, biting, or scalding, suffocating, drowning or otherwise causing physical harm to a young person. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent feigns the systems of, or deliberately causes ill health to a young person whom they are looking after e.g. fictitious illness by proxy or Munchausen's syndrome by proxy. Examples of physical abuse in Badminton may be when the nature and intensity of training and competition exceeds the capacity of the young person's immature and growing body, where drugs are used to enhance performance or delay puberty

4.3.3.3 Sexual abuse

Where girls and boys are abused by adults (both male and female) who use young people to meet their own sexual needs. This could include full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse and fondling. Showing young people pornographic material (books, videos, pictures) or talking to young people in a sexually explicit manner is also a form of sexual abuse. In Badminton, coaching techniques that involve physical contact with young people could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. The power of the coach over young performers, if misused, may also lead to abusive situations developing.

4.3.3.4 Emotional abuse

The persistent emotional ill treatment of a young person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the young people's emotional development. It may involve conveying to young people that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on young people. It may involve causing young people to feel frightened or in danger by being constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted, which may make the child very nervous and withdrawn. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a young person. Emotional abuse in Badminton may occur if children are subjected to constant criticism, name calling, and sarcasm, bullying or unrealistic pressure to perform to high expectations consistently.

NB. The above definitions are adapted from Department of Health (1999) *Working Together to Safeguard Children – A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children*

4.4 Indicators of Abuse

Indications that a child may be being abused include the following:

- ❖ unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated in a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries.
- ❖ an injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent.
- ❖ the young person describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her.
- ❖ someone else (a young person or adult) expresses concern about the welfare of another young person
- ❖ unexplained changes in behaviour (eg becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper).
- ❖ inappropriate sexual awareness.
- ❖ engaging in sexually explicit behaviour.
- ❖ distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
- ❖ has difficulty in making friends.
- ❖ is prevented from socialising with other young people
- ❖ displays variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite.
- ❖ loses weight for no apparent reason.
- ❖ becomes increasingly dirty or unkempt

It should be recognised that this list is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more of the indicators is not proof that abuse is actually taking place. A good working relationship with parents will help to identify any. It is **not** the responsibility of those working in badminton to decide that child abuse is occurring but it is their responsibility to act on any concerns. **(See Section Six)**

4.5 Bullying

It is important to recognise that in some cases of abuse, it may not always be an adult abusing a young person. It can occur that the abuser may be a young person, for example in the case of bullying. Bullying may be seen as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves.

Bullying is defined as:

Repeated (systematic) aggressive verbal, psychological or physical conduct by an individual or group against another person or persons (Nancy Duin, Bullying, a Survival Guide, produced by BBC Education).

Although anyone can be the target of bullying, victims are typically shy, sensitive and perhaps anxious or insecure. Sometimes they are singled out for physical reasons - being overweight, physically small, having a disability or belonging to a different race, faith or culture.

Girls and boys can be bullies although it seems to be more conspicuous in boys. Although bullying often takes place in schools, research shows it can and does occur anywhere where there is inadequate supervision - on the way to and from school, at a sporting event, in the playground and changing rooms.

Bullies come from all walks of life; they bully for a variety of different reasons and may even have been abused. Typically, bullies can have low self-esteem, be excitable, aggressive and jealous. Crucially, they have learned how to gain power over others and there is increasing evidence to suggest that this abuse of power can lead to crime.

4.5.1 The Badminton Bully

The competitive nature of sport makes it an ideal environment for the bully. The bully in Badminton can be:

- ❖ a parent who pushes too hard
- ❖ a coach who adopts a win-at-all costs philosophy
- ❖ a player who intimidates inappropriately
- ❖ a club official who places unfair pressure on a person
- ❖ a spectator who shouts abuse

4.5.2 Forms of Bullying

There are various forms of bullying:

- ❖ physical: e.g. pushing, hitting, kicking, pinching and theft
- ❖ verbal: e.g. name-calling, spreading rumours, racist or homophobic taunts, constant teasing and sarcasm, threats, graffiti and gestures
- ❖ emotional: e.g. tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating and ignoring
- ❖ sexual: e.g. unwanted physical contact or abusive comments

4.5.3 Damage caused by Bullying

The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to young people, to the extent that it affects their health and development or, at the extreme, causes them significant harm (including self harm). There are a number of signs that may indicate that a young person or disabled adult is being bullied:

- ❖ behavioural changes such as reduced concentration and/or becoming withdrawn, clingy, depressed, tearful, emotionally up and down, reluctance to go to school, training or badminton club
- ❖ a drop off in performance at school or standard of play
- ❖ physical signs such as stomach aches, headaches, difficulty in sleeping, bed-wetting, scratching and bruising, damaged clothes and bingeing (e.g. on food, cigarettes or alcohol)
- ❖ a shortage of money or frequent loss of possessions

CHAPTER FIVE: Child Welfare Officers

5.1 Introduction

The **Child Welfare Officer** is a key role within Badminton. By designating people to this role, it can be ensured that it has someone specifically appointed to handle any child welfare, including child protection issues that may arise. BADMINTON England has a vision of a Child Welfare Officer in every county and junior club. Due to the nature of the position, prior to appointment, these people are required to undertake a Criminal Records Bureau check much in the same way that a coach or volunteer who intends working with children and young people would. This position is fundamental to ensuring that Child Welfare is central to the philosophy of the club or county. In order that other members can provide adequate support where required, the Child Welfare Officer should be a member of the organisations management committee.

Once clearance has been received from the **BADMINTON England National Child Protection Officer**, an identity card will be issued to validate the appointment. Child Welfare Officers will require support from the County Association, Club and from the national governing body, which will include mandatory attendance on BADMINTON England's Child Welfare Officer training workshop.

A club or county may appoint more than one Club Child Welfare Officer if they so wish to cater for particular age groups and genders.

5.2 The Role of the Child Welfare Officer

The role of the Child Welfare Officer is crucial in ensuring that BADMINTON England's Child Protection Policy and Implementation Procedures work in practice.

The Child Welfare Officer acts as the first point of contact for anyone (staff, volunteer, parents or children) who has a concern about a child and about poor practice/possible abuse by adults working with children.

The Child Welfare Officer therefore needs to be seen to be approachable and as having a child-focused approach.

The Child Welfare Officer does not need to be a child protection 'expert'. That is the role of the statutory agencies (Police and Social Services). Ideally, they should have a background in working with children i.e. teachers, health visitors, social workers, or Police child protection team officers.

The Child Welfare Officer needs to be supported by their organisations management through a formal role within the committee. The management committee should adopt a child protection policy and procedures as per Appendix C. The organisation should also produce a plan about how this will be put into practice and how they will review how it is working. BADMINTON England's National Child Protection Officer will provide support and resources to support the club through this process.

5.3 Child Welfare Officer - Job Description

The following sections outline a broad job description encompassing the role undertaken by the Child Welfare Officer together with the core knowledge, skills and personal specification required to fulfill this role successfully,

- ❖ assist BADMINTON England to fulfil its responsibilities to safeguard children and young people at club and county level
- ❖ assist BADMINTON England to implement its child protection plan at club / county level

- ❖ the first point of contact for staff, volunteers, parents and children/young people in Badminton where concerns about children's welfare, poor practice or child abuse are identified
- ❖ be the first point of contact with the BADMINTON England National Child Protection Officer
- ❖ implement BADMINTON England's reporting and recording procedures
- ❖ maintain contact details for local Social Services, the Police and know how to obtain Area Child Protection Committee guidelines
- ❖ promote BADMINTON England's best practice guidance/code of ethics and conduct within the club / county
- ❖ sit on the organisations management committee
- ❖ promote and ensure adherence to BADMINTON England's child protection training plan
- ❖ promote and ensure confidentiality is maintained
- ❖ promote anti-discriminatory practice
- ❖ facilitate the Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure process within the organisation

5.4 Child Welfare Officer – Personal Specification

The Child Welfare Officer must fill the following personal specification:

5.4.1 Core Knowledge and Skills

The Child Welfare Officer must have attended the sportscoachUK '*Good Practice and Child Protection*' workshop, or an equivalent recognised direct delivery child protection basic awareness workshop, or training, prior to the specific Child Welfare Officer training administered through BADMINTON England's team of Child Welfare Tutors. The BADMINTON England National Child Protection Officer will be able to advise on the suitability and appropriateness of any training already undertaken or training opportunity.

5.4.2 Essential Knowledge

The following knowledge is considered **essential** for the Child Welfare Officer;

- ❖ basic knowledge of core legislation, government guidance and national framework for child protection
- ❖ basic knowledge of roles and responsibilities of statutory agencies (Social Services, Police and Local Safeguarding Boards)
- ❖ local arrangements for managing child protection and reporting procedures.
- ❖ poor practice and abuse – behaviour that is harmful to children
- ❖ BADMINTON England's role and responsibilities to safeguard the welfare of children and young people – boundaries of the Child Welfare Officer role
- ❖ BADMINTON England's policy and procedures related to safeguarding children and young people
- ❖ core values and principles underpinning practice
- ❖ awareness of equity issues and child protection

5.4.3 Recommended Knowledge

The knowledge of the following is recommended for Child Welfare Officers:

- ❖ basic knowledge of how abusers 'target' and 'groom' within organisations in order to abuse children
- ❖ best practice in prevention

5.4.4 Skills

The Child Welfare Officers should possess the following skills and abilities

- ❖ basic administration – maintain records
- ❖ basic advice and support provision
- ❖ child focused approach
- ❖ communication
- ❖ ability to promote BADMINTON England's Child Protection policy, procedures and resources
- ❖ ability to provide information about local resources

CHAPTER SIX: Responding to Disclosure, Suspicions and Allegations

6.1 Introduction

People within Badminton are ideally placed to recognise or receive concerns relating to the welfare of young people. Everybody has a responsibility to respond to these concerns whether they relate to a child's home or family situation; a community situation or involves incidents within the club or sport

It is important to note that a child or young person may not share your concerns. It is vital, therefore, that adults who are in contact with young people are alert to the possibility that children may be at risk of abuse or experiencing harm in some area of their lives.

6.2 Responding to a direct disclosure from a Young Person

If a child or young person informs you directly that he/she, or another young person, is concerned about someone's behaviour towards them (this is termed a 'disclosure'), the person receiving information should:

- ❖ react calmly so as not to frighten or deter the young person;
- ❖ tell the young person he/she is not to blame and that he/she was right to tell;
- ❖ take what the young person says seriously, recognising the difficulties inherent in interpreting what is said by a child who has a speech disability and/or differences in language;
- ❖ keep questions to the absolute minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said;
- ❖ reassure the child but do not make promises of confidentiality, which might not be feasible in the light of subsequent developments;
- ❖ make a full record of what had been said, heard and/or seen as soon as possible utilising the BADMINTON England Incident Referral Form (see Template 4).
- ❖ Respond to allegation by disclosing information into the relevant channels based on the information below.

NB: It may not be that all young or vulnerable players are able to express themselves verbally. Communication difficulties may mean that it is hard for them to complain or be understood. Sometimes it is difficult to distinguish the signs of abuse from the symptoms of some disabilities or conditions, in relation to the nature of an individual's impairment. However, where there are concerns about the safety of a young player, record what has been observed in detail and follow the BADMINTON England procedures to report these concerns.

6.2.1 Actions to Avoid:

The following actions must be avoided when responding to a disclosure. The person receiving the disclosure should not:

- ❖ panic
- ❖ allow your shock or distaste to show
- ❖ do not ask questions or probe for more information than is offered other than to clarify that you have understood what has been said
- ❖ speculate or make assumptions
- ❖ make negative comments about the alleged abuser

- ❖ approach the alleged abuser
- ❖ make promises or agree to keep secrets

6.3 Responding to allegations within Badminton

It is not the responsibility of anyone working for BADMINTON England or affiliated organisations in any capacity, whether paid or voluntary, to decide whether or not child abuse is taking place or to investigate it. It is the responsibility of everyone in Badminton, however, to ensure that action is taken to ensure that a child is protected appropriately.

If a young person informs you directly that he/she is being abused within the Badminton environment **OR** through your own observations or through a third party you become aware of possible abuse or poor practice within the Badminton environment, you must **REACT IMMEDIATELY** following the guidance within this document.

6.3.1 Possible Abuse Situation

If a young person says or indicates that he/ she is being abused, or information is obtained or observations are made which gives concern that a young person is being abused, you must **REACT IMMEDIATELY**.

- ❖ **ensure the safety of the young person** - if the young person needs immediate medical treatment, take the young person to hospital or call an ambulance, inform doctors of concerns and ensure they are aware it is a child protection issue;
- ❖ **if available, contact your Child Welfare Officer immediately** who will follow the reporting procedures detailed below

6.3.1.1 Reporting Procedures

If the Child Welfare Officer cannot be contacted or is the subject of the allegation, then the person that has the concerns about the young person's welfare must follow the reporting procedures

- ❖ **Seek advice immediately from the local Social Services or Police** who will advise on the action to be taken, including advice on contacting parents. Expert advice can also be provided by the free 24 hour NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000;
- ❖ **Make a full and factual record of events** utilising the BADMINTON England Incident Referral Form (Template 4). Forward a copy of the recorded information, as directed by the Social Services and/or Police, and also to the BADMINTON England National Child Protection Officer within 24 hours who will take appropriate internal action. Contact the Child Welfare Officer as soon as possible, who should also receive a copy of the recorded information.

6.3.1.2 Possible Outcomes

Where there is a complaint of abuse against a member of staff or volunteer, investigations may include:

- ❖ a police enquiry
- ❖ criminal proceedings
- ❖ civil proceedings
- ❖ referral back to Child Protection Disciplinary Panel

The results of the Police and/or Social Services investigation may help to inform the BADMINTON England Child Protection Disciplinary Panel investigation.

6.3.2 Poor Practice

The following actions should be followed in the event of poor practice:

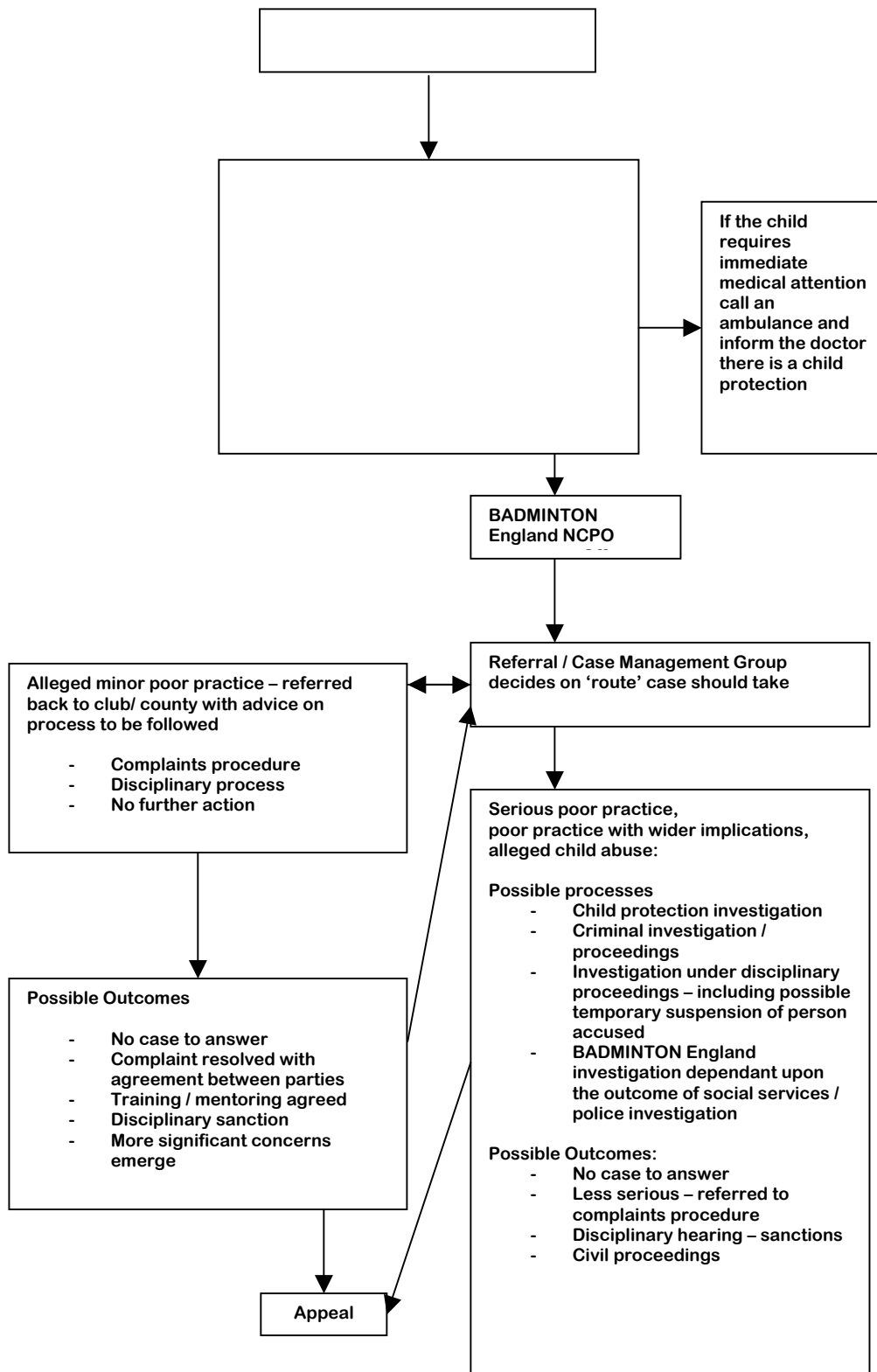
- ❖ **contact the Child Welfare Officer or designated person.** If an allegation is about poor practice (see definition at section 3.2 on page 10), then the Child Welfare Officer or designated person must report it immediately to the BADMINTON England National Child Protection Officer. If the Child Welfare Officer or designated person is unavailable or is the subject of the allegation, then the matter should be reported directly to the BADMINTON England National Child Protection Officer;
- ❖ **if the case is one of minor poor practice** then the BADMINTON England National Child Protection Officer will refer it back to the club or county with advice on the process to be followed i.e. instigation of the complaints procedure, disciplinary process, no further action (see flow chart on page 23);
- ❖ **if the case is one of serious poor practice** i.e. poor practice with wider implications including alleged child abuse then the **BADMINTON England Child Protection Case Management and Referral Group** will then decide on the 'route' the case should take e.g. internally by the BADMINTON England Child Protection Disciplinary Panel or externally through referral to Social Services and/or the Police or both. The terms of reference for this group are available in Appendix J. A decision will also be made with regard to suspending the individual concerned, pending the outcome of the internal or external enquiry. All cases where there are concerns about possible child abuse will be referred to the Statutory Agencies
- ❖ **Child Protection Disciplinary Hearings** will, when convened, run in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedures of the Association and comprise of a Chairperson, three other members and have a designated Secretary in attendance. A summary of this process is available in appendix K

There is no time limit to the submission of allegations or incidents of a Child Protection nature.

6.3.2.1 Possible Outcomes of the BADMINTON England Child Protection Disciplinary Panel hearing

- ❖ no case to answer
- ❖ warrants advice/warning as to future conduct/sanctions
- ❖ fines
- ❖ further training and support needed
- ❖ temporary or permanent suspension from the coaches register
- ❖ temporary or permanent removal from position if employed by BADMINTON England
- ❖ temporary or permanent removal from representative squads
- ❖ temporary or permanent removal from the association
- ❖ any other outcome of a reasonable nature as deemed by the panel

What to do if you are worried about the behaviour of any member, volunteer, staff, coach or official in Badminton or partner / affiliate organisation.



6.3.2.2 Appeals

The appeals procedure is available to anyone under investigation as part of natural justice. A BADMINTON England Disciplinary Appeal Panel run in accordance to the general disciplinary procedures of the Association and will exclude anyone sitting on the initial panel, excluding the

Secretary. The Panel should comprise of a Chair and three other members with the Secretary in attendance. Every organisation and player wishing to appeal against decisions by the BADMINTON England Child Protection Disciplinary Panel must do so in writing, to be received by the BADMINTON England National Child Protection Officer within seven (7) days of the decision being made.

6.3.2.3 Monitoring and Evaluation

To be conducted at the close of the case to see if changes need to be made to policies/procedures or lessons can be learnt.

6.4 Reinstatements and Aftermath

Irrespective of the findings of any Social Services or Police Enquiries, when someone has been temporarily suspended subject to an investigation, a BADMINTON England Child Protection Disciplinary Panel will assess individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. This may be a difficult decision; particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the Police. In such cases, the BADMINTON England Child Protection Disciplinary Panel must reach a decision based upon the available information which could suggest that on a balance of probability; it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. **The welfare of young people should always remain paramount.**

6.4.1 Support to Deal with the Aftermath

Consideration should be given about what support may be appropriate to young people, parents and members of staff. Use of Helplines, support groups and open meetings will maintain an open culture and help the healing process. The British Association of Counselling Directory (Tel: 01788 562189) may be a useful resource. Thought should be given about what support may be appropriate to the alleged perpetrator of the abuse.

6.5 Responding to concerns about possible abuse outside sport

BADMINTON England's primary responsibility is to ensure that concerns and any relevant information are passed on to the police or social services without delay. These organisations have the statutory responsibility to make enquiries to establish if a child is at risk of harm.

If a young person informs you directly that he/she is being abused **OUTSIDE** the Badminton environment (i.e. at home or some other setting outside of Badminton) **OR** through your own observations or through a third party you become aware of possible abuse outside the Badminton environment, you must **REACT IMMEDIATELY**.

- ❖ **ensure the safety of the young person** - if the young person needs immediate medical treatment, take the young person to hospital or call an ambulance, inform doctors of concerns and ensure they are aware it is a child protection issue;
- ❖ **pass any concerns to the Club/County Child Welfare Officer** It is vital that individuals within Badminton are aware of the BADMINTON England's guidance and pass any concerns to a Child Welfare Officer at national, county or club level, or the person in charge, who will follow the reporting procedures below.

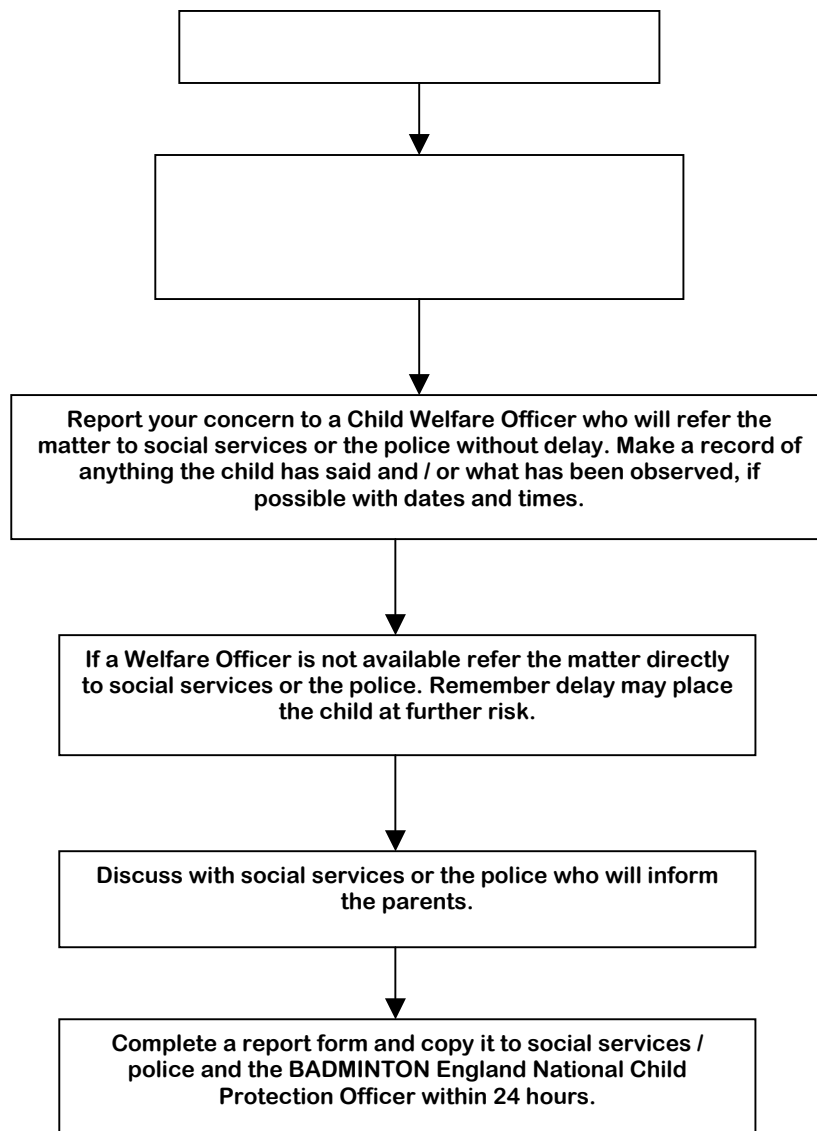
6.5.1 Reporting Procedures

If neither person is available, or cannot be contacted, the person that has concerns about a young persons welfare should pass the information directly to Social Services or the Police following the subsequent reporting procedures:

- ❖ seek advice immediately from the local Social Services or Police who will advise on the action to be taken, including advice on contacting parents. Expert advice can also be provided by the NSPCC's 24 hour free Helpline on 0808 800 5000.
- ❖ make a full and factual record of events utilising the BADMINTON England's Child Protection Incident Referral Form (Template 4) and forward a copy of the recorded information, as directed by the Social Services and/or Police, and also to the BADMINTON England National Child Protection Officer within 24 hours.
- ❖ contact the Club Child Welfare Officer as soon as possible, who should also receive a copy of the recorded information;

It is never easy to respond to a young person who tells you that they are being abused and you may feel upset and worried yourself. Make sure that you are offered adequate support by discussing the matter with the BADMINTON England National Child Protection Officer.

What to do if you are worried that a child is being abused outside of the Badminton environment (but concern is identified through the child's involvement in Badminton)



6.6 Records and Information

Information passed to the Social Services or the Police must be as accurate and helpful as possible, hence the necessity for making a detailed record at the time of the disclosure/concern. Ideally this

information should be compiled utilising the BADMINTON England Child Protection Incident Referral Form at Template 4.

6.6.1 Information required at the referral stage: From the Child

The following information must be recorded on the BADMINTON England Child Protection Incident Referral Form

- ❖ age / gender / name / disabilities / address / parental responsibility / culture / agencies already working with family / relationship between young person and accused.

6.6.2 Information required at the referral stage: About the accused

The following information must be recorded on the BADMINTON England Child Protection Incident Referral Form

- ❖ name / address / position in sport – employee / volunteer / paid / level of coach;
- ❖ any other allegations;
- ❖ marital status;
- ❖ age;
- ❖ previous incidents.

6.6.3 Information required at the referral stage: Primary evidence

Core information about the alleged incident.

- ❖ the nature of the allegation;
- ❖ facts from the person making the allegation including dates / times / venue / witness details;
- ❖ description of any visible injuries or bruising
- ❖ records with dates;
- ❖ has anyone else been informed or is anyone else already involved in the investigation.

Reporting the matter to the Police or Social Services department should not be delayed by attempts to obtain more information. Wherever possible, referrals telephoned to the Social Services department should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours. A record should also be made of the name and designation of the Social Services member of staff or Police officer to whom the concerns were passed, together with the time and date of the call, in case any follow up is needed.

A copy of this information should also be sent direct to the BADMINTON England National Child Protection Officer within 24 hours and a copy should be retained by the Club/County Child Welfare Officer and stored in a secure place.

6.7 The Role of Social Services

Social Services have a statutory responsibility, under The Childrens Act 1989, to ensure the welfare of children and work with the **Local Area Safeguarding Boards** to comply with its procedures. When a child protection referral is made, the Social Services staff have a legal responsibility to make enquiries where a child who lives or is found in their area is considered to be at risk of, or actually suffering from, significant harm. This may involve talking to the young person and family, and gathering information from other people who know the young person. Enquiries may be carried out jointly with the Police where a crime has been alleged. If action needs to be taken urgently and out of office hours, then the Police will deal with the enquiry sensitively and effectively. Local authorities will need to link in closely with their respective Safeguarding Boards and cross-reference the guidance produced by the Safeguarding Boards.

6.8 Confidentiality

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned.

Information should be handled and disseminated on a 'need to know basis' only. This includes the following people:

- ❖ the Child Welfare Officer;
- ❖ the person making the allegation;
- ❖ Social Services/Police;
- ❖ the BADMINTON England National Child Protection Officer,
- ❖ the BADMINTON England Child Protection Case Management and Referral Group

- ❖ the alleged abuser (and parents if the alleged abuser is a young person) **only following advice from Social Services.**

Information should be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws (e.g. that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).

6.8.1 Sharing Concerns with Parents or Guardians

There is always a commitment to work in partnership with parents or carers where there are concerns about their children, however **the parents or guardians of the person who is alleged to have been abused should only be informed following the strict advice from Social Services** as this may hamper any enquiries or put the young person at a greater risk.

6.9 Allegations of previous abuse

Allegations of abuse may be made some time after the event (e.g. by an adult who was abused as a young person or by a member of staff who is still currently working with children). Where such an allegation is made, the club should follow the procedures as detailed in 6.3.1. This is because other children, either within or outside sport, may be at risk from this person. Anyone who has a previous criminal conviction for offences related to abuse is automatically excluded from working with children. This is reinforced by the details of the Protection of Children Act 1999.

6.10 Responding to suspected Bullying

The same procedure should be followed as set out in Section 6.3.2 if bullying is suspected. All settings in which children are provided with services or are living away from home should have rigorously enforced anti-bullying strategies in place.

6.10.1 Action to Help the Victim and Prevent Bullying in Sport

- ❖ take all signs of bullying very seriously;
- ❖ encourage all children to speak and share their concerns. Help the victim to speak out and tell the person in charge/someone in authority. Create an open environment;
- ❖ investigate all allegations and take action to ensure the victim is safe. Speak with the victim and the bully(ies) separately;
- ❖ reassure the victim that you can be trusted and will help them, although you cannot promise to tell no one else;
- ❖ keep records of what is said (what happened, by whom, when);
- ❖ report any concerns to the Club Child Welfare Officer or the school (wherever the bullying is occurring).

6.10.2 Action Towards the Bully(ies):

- ❖ talk with the bully(ies), explain the situation, and try to get the bully(ies) to understand the consequences of their behaviour. Seek an apology to the victim(s)
- ❖ inform the bully(ies) parents
- ❖ insist on the return of borrowed items and that the bully(ies) compensate the victim
- ❖ provide support for the coach of the victim
- ❖ impose sanctions as necessary
- ❖ encourage and support the bully(ies) to change behaviour
- ❖ hold meetings with the families to report on progress
- ❖ inform all organisation members of action taken
- ❖ keep a written record of action taken

Appendices to Child Protection Policy and Procedures In Badminton

MAY 2005

**In partnership with the National Society for the Prevention of
Cruelty to Children and the Child Protection in Sport Unit.**