

REPORTING CONCERNS – CHILDREN



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1. What to do if you have a concern or someone raises concerns with you

- 1.1. This document is designed to provide support and information of what to do should you receive a concern relating to the well-being a child. Please remember that key to this, if you are not the designated safeguarding lead it is not for you to decide/investigate whether poor practice or abuse has taken place , it is your responsibility to pass those concerns on. Here at the BMC there is a dedicated Safeguarding Team who are here to support you, please feel free to contact them a key part of their role is to provide support , guidance and information in ensuring a safe environment for all.
- 1.2. If a child or young person talks to you and you recognise this as a concern or an indication of poor practice or possible abuse you should:
 - 1.2.1. React calmly: do not rush into inappropriate action. What you are told may be very shocking but it is important you give the child some stability;
 - 1.2.2. Reassure them that they are not to blame and that they did the right thing to tell someone, i.e. you, about the incident;
 - 1.2.3. Take them seriously and listen carefully to them and be patient. Recognise how difficult it was for them to tell you;
 - 1.2.4. Let them tell you in their own words and only use questions to clarify details of their account.;
 - 1.2.5. If possible allow only one adult to talk to the child to begin with. It is possible that discrepancies in the account of what has happened can, in the event of the allegation being referred, lead to legal complications later;
 - 1.2.6. Try not to make the child repeat their account unnecessarily;
 - 1.2.7. Do not make promises you cannot keep. Explain that you will have to tell other people but that you will share on a strict need to know basis.
 - 1.2.8. Make a full record of what has been said, heard or seen as soon as possible. And ensure you use their words
- 1.3. If a child or young person talks to you and you recognise this as a concern or an indication of poor practice or possible abuse, you **should NOT**:
 - 1.3.1. Panic
 - 1.3.2. Take sole responsibility for further action
 - 1.3.3. Approach or try to contact the person alleged to have caused the concern
 - 1.3.4. Ignore what has happened
 - 1.3.5. Make promises you cannot keep

2. Recording information

- 2.1. It is vital that the information recorded provides as much detail as possible and it should contain:
 - 2.1.1.The nature of the incident/concern;
 - 2.1.2.The names and contact details of those involved
 - 2.1.3.A description of any visible injuries;
 - 2.1.4.The child's account;
 - 2.1.5.Times, dates, where the incident occurred;
 - 2.1.6.Any witnesses to the incident
 - 2.1.7.Records must show a clear distinction between what is fact, hearsay and opinion;
- 2.2. Once complete this must be shared with the BMC utilising the webform or incident report form – please see the reporting concerns flowcharts for guidance

3. Storage, Access to and Retention of Recorded Information

Information passed to the BMC must be kept securely, either electronically or in lockable, non-portable, storage containers with access strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

4. Allegations of previous abuse

Allegations of abuse may be made a long time after the event (e.g., by an adult who was abused as a child or by a member of staff who is still currently working with children). Where such an allegation is made the procedures in section **what you should do next** (within this document) should be followed and when appropriate Children's Services and or the Police will be informed. This is important as other children may still be at risk from the accused individual should the allegation be proved to be correct.

5. What you should do next

5.1. Concerns about poor practice and possible abuse within a BMC setting

This relates to all those involved within BMC activities.

5.1.1. Concerns and allegations about child abuse require very careful handling and should be treated with the strictest confidence. Any form of abuse can ultimately result in a criminal conviction. It is important to keep an open mind and that all allegations are kept in the strictest practical confidence. It is important you act on your concerns.

5.1.2. If the concern/allegation is suspected abuse and relates to a BMC member (Individual or Club Member), volunteer, official or member of staff it should be reported to the Safeguarding Team

- Via the webform link <https://bmc.vissro.com/public/bmccase.nsf/safeguarding-report> or
- emailing safeguarding@thebmc.co.uk

who, may in turn, refer it to Social Services or the Police. Concerns over members of the public may be referred directly to Social Services.

5.1.3. In all cases the BMC Safeguarding Team should be informed.

5.1.4. Following **advice from Children's Services** the parents or carers of the child may be informed by the Safeguarding Team. Where there is concern for the safety of a child/children Children's Services or the Police will contact the child's parents. Where there is an allegation against a parent, the Police or Children's Services will contact the family.

5.1.5. If the concern is about a member of staff or volunteer, they will then be notified that an allegation has been made and where appropriate suspended from their duties.

Alternatively, you can contact the NSPCC help line on 0808 800 5000 or email help@NSPCC.org.uk

You can also seek advice from the Police and Children's Services who have staff trained to deal with these sorts of issues.

5.1.6. Depending on the course of action decided upon by the BMC, and after consulting with professional childcare services, the flow chart overleaf sets out what will happen next.

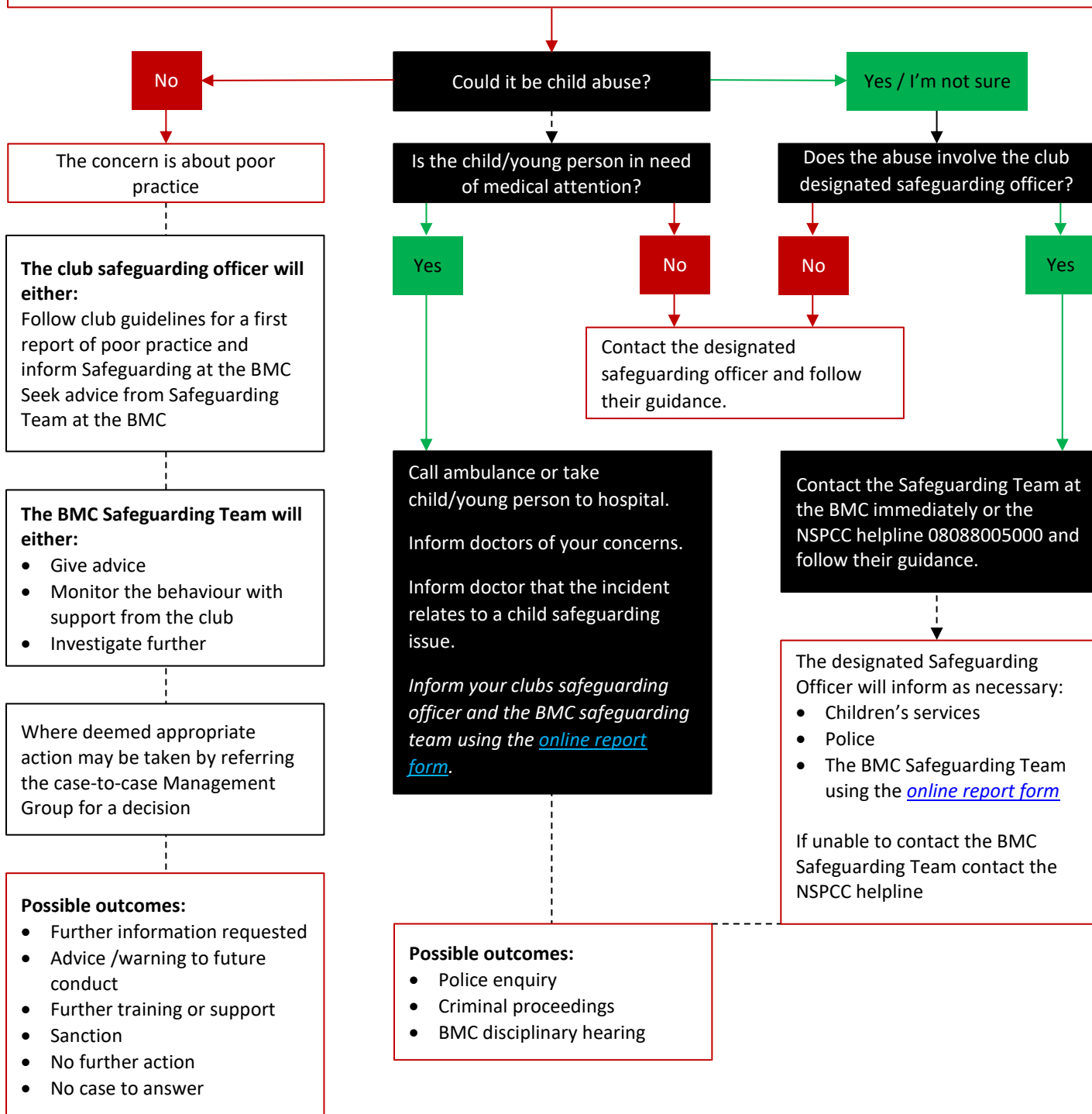
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Dealing with concerns, disclosure or allegations about BMC staff, coaches or volunteers

A concern about the behaviour of a BMC member, a member of staff or volunteer

- Stay calm
- If the young person is present, reassure them that they are not to blame
- Do not promise confidentiality or a possible outcome
- Keep questions to a minimum
- Keep a written record



5.2. Concerns about abuse outside a BMC setting

- 5.2.1. If this happens you should ensure the safety of the young person. If they require immediate attention call an ambulance, inform a doctor of your concerns and ensure that they are aware that this is a child safeguarding issue.
- 5.2.2. BMC procedures should then be followed (**please see the flow chart on the next page**). You should refer your concerns to the BMC Safeguarding Team using email safeguarding@thebmc.co.uk.
- 5.2.3. If a formal referral is made make it clear that it is a child safeguarding issue. All Police forces have a specialised Child Safeguarding Units which deals with allegations of abuse within the family and by people in positions of trust. In a real emergency, or if completely unsure as to what to do, telephone 999.
- 5.2.4. Parents/carers should only be contacted **after** advice from Children's Services.
- 5.2.5. It can be especially difficult for children who are from an ethnic minority, have disabilities, or mental health issues, are LGBTQ+, have gender or gender reassignment issues, or elite climbers to disclose abuse to others. Adults should be especially vigilant with these groups and be aware that their own prejudices may block them from believing these groups. It is important to give thought as to how adults respond in these situations.

In all cases it is important that the welfare of the child is paramount and that every effort is made to maintain confidentiality.

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Dealing with possible abuse occurring outside a BMC setting

