



Child Wellbeing and Protection – Responding to Concerns Procedure

Based on guidance from:



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Support & Training for Adults working with Children & Young People

Any adult who regularly works with children and young people in sport may be the person that a child/young person chooses to tell about abuse, or other things that are worrying them. It is vital that adults know how to respond and know how to share information with those who can help.

Those people working with or making decisions about children and young people should be suitably trained, qualified and supported. They should:

- Know the contact name and details of CGS Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer (CWPO).
- Have signed the code of conduct for working with children and young people.
- Know and understand the good practice guidelines.
- Know and understand the responding to concerns procedures.
- Be aware of other relevant policies.
- Attend Child Wellbeing and Protection in Sport, (or another basic child protection awareness workshop) within 3 months of taking up their post.

Consider the roles at CGS that need specific training and the type of mandatory training required to be completed. Attendance by individuals holding the positions with responsibility for children and young people should be recorded carefully to keep skills and knowledge up to date.

Responding to a Wellbeing of Protection Concern

A set procedure for responding to a wellbeing or protection concern about a child/young person makes sure that everyone is clear on what action to take in the event of a concern being raised. The procedure is based on three steps: **Recognise, Respond, Record, Report**.

The following principles underpin the procedure:

- The wellbeing of the child/young person is the paramount consideration.
- Parents/carers have the primary responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of their children and where possible CGS should work in partnership with parents/carers when there are concerns about a child/young person.
- Children and young people have the right to say what they think in all matters affecting them and to have their views taken seriously (Article 12, UNCRC). It is important therefore to seek the views of the child/young person, where relevant and appropriate, and to seek their consent for further reporting of the concern.
- Where the concern about a child/young person's wellbeing suggests that they are in need of protection, the information must be passed on to police/social work with or without the child/young person's consent for the purposes of their protection. Allegations of abuse must always be taken seriously. **No member of CGS shall investigate allegations of abuse or decide whether or not a child/young person has been abused.**

Responding to Concerns Procedure for Children and Young People

This procedure sets out the steps which should be taken to respond to any concerns about the safety, protection and wellbeing of a child or young person that come to the attention of Commonwealth Games Scotland (CGS). This procedure should be read in conjunction with the CGS 'Children and Young People - Wellbeing and Protection Policy'.

CGS staff and volunteers may be informed in different ways with regards to details of a concern about a child/young person. This may be:

- A direct disclosure by a child/young person.
- Through observation of a child/young person, demonstrated by a change in their behaviour, appearance or nature.
- Information that is shared from another individual or organisation.

What to do if there is a Wellbeing Concern about a Child/Young Person

The following section details the procedure to be followed where there is a wellbeing concern about a child or young person. **Appendix 9** shows a flowchart of this procedure.

If the CGS CWPO determines that the concern relates to the safety or protection of a child or young person, the procedure for a child protection concern, detailed below, should be followed.

Recognise

Defining child wellbeing concerns

Child wellbeing can be described in terms of eight indicators: Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible and Included (SHANARRI). This is a core component of Getting It Right For Every Child, the Scottish Government's approach to children and young people's wellbeing. These need to be considered to enable children to reach their full potential. See **Appendix 10**.

Child wellbeing concerns are those that, in isolation, do not always meet the threshold for a child protection referral but still have an impact on the wellbeing of the child or young person.

A range of experiences can have negative effects on a child or young person's wellbeing, for example bullying, mental health concerns, bereavement, family separation or parents pressuring their child to achieve in sport. It is important to recognise if support is needed by a child or young person and help early support to be identified.

There may also be situations where a volunteer or member of staff's behaviour, which could be constituted as a low-level concern or otherwise, could have an impact on the wellbeing of a child or young person. Examples may include: shouting; using extra drills/exercises as punishment;

singling children and young people out in front of peers for minor things such as leaving kit behind; or displaying favouritism. It is important to note that child wellbeing concerns may, with further exploration or over time, escalate to become more significant child protection concerns and therefore it is important to respond appropriately and at the earliest opportunity.

Respond

Any wellbeing concern about a child or young person should be considered in line with the wellbeing indicators.

Wellbeing concerns should always be discussed with the child or young person, and their view taken into account. Parents/carers have the primary responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of their children and, as such, wellbeing concerns should also be discussed with them.

The best interests of the child or young person will be considered as to what is the best way forward for each individual. Where appropriate, consent should be gained from the child or young person with regard to future actions and further support.

Where there is information shared with a CGS staff member or volunteer that indicates a significant change to a child or young person's presentation, relationships or situation, giving concern for the child or young person's health and development, this should be shared with the CGS Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer (CGS CWPO).

Record

Make a written record of the wellbeing concern as soon as possible using the Concern Recording Form (**Appendix 8**), completing as much of the form as possible. This should be stored securely, in line with CGS policy and GDPR requirements, and shared with the CWPO.

The CGS CWPO will share this written information with the relevant SGB with the consent of the child and/or parents/carers.

Report

All wellbeing concerns should be reported to the CGS CWPO as soon as possible. The CGS CWPO will get consent from the child and/or parents carers to liaise with the CWPO for the relevant sports governing body (SGB) of which the young person is a member, to agree the most appropriate party to liaise with parents/carers.

The CGS CWPO and the SGB CWPO should agree on the following:

- if information should be shared with any other organisations, such as the child or young person's school. Should this be deemed necessary, this would be agreed with the child and their parents/carers first.
- any action or support that may be required for the child or young person, whether from the SGB directly or through an external organisation, e.g. signposting to GP or counsellor.
- persons responsible within the SGB and timescales for agreed actions.

Monitoring

The SGB should monitor the child or young person's ongoing wellbeing, and provide updated information to CGS as deemed appropriate, in line with GDPR and the partnership agreement.

What to do if there is a Child Protection Concern

The following section details the procedure to be followed where there is a concern about the possible abuse of a child or young person. **Appendix 9** shows a flowchart of this procedure.

Recognise

Defining child protection concerns

In this context, a child protection concern is where it is believed that a child or young person may be at risk from abuse, neglect, exploitation, violence or harm.

There are many different types of abuse including: Physical Abuse; Sexual Abuse; Emotional Abuse; Neglect; Online Abuse; and Child Exploitation.

It is important to have an understanding of the signs and indicators of the different types of abuse and neglect as well as how they can intersect with one another. Detailed information can be found in Part 4 of the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland ([national-guidance-child-protection-scotland-2021-updated-2023.pdf](#)).

Respond

If you are concerned about the immediate safety of the child, you should contact the police on 999 and take whatever action is required to ensure their immediate safety.

Allegations of abuse must always be taken seriously. If a child or young person says or indicates they are being abused or information is obtained which gives concern that a child or young person is being abused, the information must be responded to on the same day.

Where a direct disclosure is made by a child or young person then the following practice approaches should be followed:

Good Practice:

- React calmly so as not to frighten the child/young person.
- Consider what requirements a child/young person may need to communicate effectively (e.g. do they have any additional support needs, is English their first language etc.).
- Listen to the child/young person and take what they say seriously. Do not show disbelief.
- Reassure the child/young person they are not to blame and were right to tell someone.
- Avoid asking any questions. If necessary, only ask enough questions to gain basic information to establish the possibility that abuse may have occurred. Only use open-ended, non-leading questions e.g. Who? What? Where? When? (never why)
- It's important to explain to the child/young person who you may need to share information with and why. Don't promise to keep information to yourself.
- Do not introduce personal information from either your own experiences or those of other children/young people.

Avoid:

- Panicking.
- Showing shock or distaste.
- Probing for more information than is offered.
- Speculating or making assumptions.
- Approaching the individual against whom the allegation has been made.
- Making negative comments about the person against whom the allegation has been made.
- Making promises or agreeing to keep secrets and giving a guarantee of confidentiality.

Record

A written record of the information should be made as soon as possible using the Concern Recording Form (**Appendix 8**), completing as much of the form as possible. The information in the form will help the CGS CWPO, police and social work to decide what action to take next.

This form should be completed immediately and shared with the CWPO. This should be stored securely in line with CGS policy and GDPR requirements.

Reporting concerns should not be delayed by gathering information to complete all sections of the form. It is important to record the actual words used by the child/young person.

The CGS CWPO will share this written information with the relevant SGB.

Report

Inform the CGS CWPO as soon as possible and on the same day. The CGS CWPO will liaise with the CWPO for the relevant SGB of which the child/young person is a member, to share the concern, obtain any relevant background information and agree actions.

The CGS CWPO will share this information with the social work services and/or police without delay and take advice about the next steps. Where the SGB CWPO cannot be immediately contacted to discuss the concern, the CGS CWPO will not wait to hear from them prior to contacting social work services or the police.

For advice and guidance if CWPO support is unavailable within CGS, and when an immediate response may be required, social work services and/or the police should be contacted directly. All advice should be recorded and shared with the CGS CWPO at the earliest opportunity.

Children First can be contacted on 0141 419 1156, cwps@childrenfirst.org.uk at any point where any support or advice is required.

Ongoing support

CGS and SGBs should jointly plan any ongoing support requirements for the child or young person and ensure that any further relevant information relating to the child or young person's safety, and protection is passed to the relevant authorities.

Sharing Concerns with Parents/Carers

Concerns should be shared with parents/carers before a referral is made to social work services or the police. However, where there are concerns that sharing such information with the parents/carers may place the child/young person at further risk or potentially jeopardise any criminal investigation, advice must then be sought from the police or social work services as to when and who should inform the parents/carers.

Consideration should be given by the CGS CWPO, along with the SGB CWPO as to who the most appropriate person is to make contact with the family.

Responding to concerns about the conduct of a CGS Team Member

The following section details the procedure to be followed when there is a concern about the conduct of a team member when they are or were undertaking a role under the jurisdiction of CGS. **Appendix 11** shows a flowchart of this procedure.

If CGS were to receive information outlining concerns about an individual which did not occur whilst they were undertaking a role under the jurisdiction of CGS, then CGS should report these concerns to the appropriate statutory authorities and/or relevant SGB.

In all cases, where there are concerns about the conduct of a team member towards a child/young person, the best interests and wellbeing of the child/young person will be the paramount consideration. These procedures aim to ensure that all concerns about the conduct of a team member are dealt with in a timely, appropriate and proportionate manner.

No one in receipt of information that causes concern about the conduct of a team member towards children and young people shall keep that information to themselves or attempt to deal with the matter on their own.

At any point in responding to concerns about the conduct of an adult, advice may be sought from the police or social work services.

Initial Reporting of Concerns

Any concerns for the wellbeing of a child/young person arising from the conduct of a team member must be reported to the CGS CWPO on the day the concern arises, as soon as practically possible.

Where the concern is about the CGS CWPO, concerns should be reported to the Chief Executive or Chair of the Board of CGS.

Record

Make a written record of the information as soon as possible using the Concern Recording Form in **Appendix 8**, completing as much of the form as possible. Reporting of concerns to the CWPO should not be delayed by gathering information to complete the form or until a written record has been made. The information in the form will help the CGS CWPO to decide what action to take next.

All subsequent actions taken and reasons for decisions shall be recorded by the CWPO on the Concern Recording Form. This should be signed and dated by the CGS CWPO or the person appointed to manage the response process.

For advice and guidance when/if the CGS CWPO is unavailable, or when an immediate response is required, the CWPO's designated deputy should be contacted.

Conducting an Initial Assessment

Once the concerns have been reported, the CGS CWPO, or the person appointed to manage the response process will:

- Establish the basic facts by conducting an initial assessment in order to determine the appropriate course of action.
- Consult external agencies such as the police and social work services for advice at any time. This is important because they may hold other important information which, when considered alongside the current concerns, builds a significant picture of concern.

The purpose of the initial assessment is to clarify the nature and context of the concerns. It does not form part of an investigation and should not stray into undertaking an investigation. This should happen very quickly and by the end of an initial assessment, a decision is made about whether to proceed to a full investigation. Every situation is unique so guidance cannot be prescriptive.

Speaking to the person who is subject to the concern

Subject to the nature and seriousness of the situation, if it is not clear at this stage whether a criminal offence may have been committed, the team member may be approached as part of the information gathering process.

If the nature and seriousness of the information suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed and there are concerns that undertaking any further information gathering process may jeopardise a criminal investigation, then advice should be sought from the police before the team member is approached.

Speaking to children/young people

An initial assessment of the basic facts may require the need to ask a child/young person some basic, open-ended, non-leading questions solely with a view to clarifying the basic facts. It may also be necessary to ask similar basic questions of other children and young people, or other appropriate individuals.

Consideration should be given to the following:

- Consent from the parents/carer.
- Age, gender and background of the child/young person.
- Support required from a relative or other responsible adult (not involved in the case).
- Any assistance needed to communicate.
- Emotional state.
- Timing and location to accommodate the child/young person's daily routines.
- What will happen if the child/young person becomes upset.
- Other information that may be relevant.
- Creating a setting that is not intimidating.
- Only those who need to be there should be present whilst speaking to the child/young person.
- Questions should be clear and non-threatening.

If the nature of the concerns suggests a criminal offence has occurred or that a child/young person may have been abused, then it is the job of specially trained and competent police officers and social workers to interview the child/young person. Questioning of children and

young people by those conducting an initial assessment should always be avoided as far as possible. If it is necessary to speak to the child or young person in order to clarify the basic facts, consent will be obtained from a parent/carer.

Possible outcomes of the initial assessment:

- (i) No further action (facts do not substantiate concern raised).
- (ii) Poor Practice/Inappropriate Behaviour, now commonly described as a Low Level Concern, identified and informal action taken.
- (iii) Serious poor practice/misconduct (not of a criminal nature) identified and investigation under CGS Disciplinary Procedures.
- (iv) Possible criminal behaviour identified and referral made to police. Advice from police informs timing of internal investigation and disciplinary process.

(i) Initial assessment concludes facts do not substantiate the concern raised

Where there is no factual basis to the concern raised, the CWPO will update the person who raised the concern and the person who was the subject of the concern, that the issue is resolved.

(ii) Initial assessment identifies a Low-Level Concern/Poor Practice

Where the concern has been assessed as being a low-level concern or poor practice, the following outcomes may be possible:

- No further action
- Value based conversation with individual to:
 - *Clarify why behaviours were concerning and inappropriate*
 - *Clarify the change required*
 - *Identify any support needed*
 - *Provide clarity on the consequences if behaviour repeated*
- Completion of an action plan or risk assessment and agreed with the individual
- Management guidance issued
- Requirement to complete relevant training
- Disciplinary procedure invoked

All Low-Level Concerns/poor practice should be recorded chronologically and stored securely in a central Low Level Concerns file for the member of staff/volunteer. This allows for any potential patterns of behaviour to be spotted and any required escalation to a child protection concern.

(iii) Initial assessment supports concerns about serious poor practice/misconduct (not of a criminal nature)

This will be managed under CGS's disciplinary policy. The CWPO will initiate an investigation and agree the terms of reference with the disciplinary manager.

In the event of an investigation into the conduct of a member of CGS volunteers/staff, all actions will be informed by the principles of natural justice:

- They will be made aware of the nature of the concern.
- They will be given an opportunity to put forward their case.
- CGS will act in good faith, ensuring the matter is dealt with impartially and as quickly as possible in the circumstances.

(iv) Initial assessment supports concerns about possible criminal behaviour

Where the initial assessment of information gives reasonable cause to suspect or believe possible child abuse, the CWPO will refer the concerns to the police as soon as possible, on the day the information is received.

Referrals to the police should be made by telephone and confirmed in writing by the CWPO within 24 hours. A copy of the Concern Recording Form will be provided to the police on request. The name and designation of the police officer to whom the concerns were passed, together with the incident report number, will be recorded by the CWPO.

Appropriate steps will be taken to ensure the safety of the child or young person who may be at risk. The parents/carers of the child or young person involved will be informed as soon as possible, following advice from the police.

Advice will firstly be obtained from the police about informing the adult involved in the concerns. If the advice is to inform them, they will be told that information has been received which may suggest an allegation of abuse or possible criminal offence. No details will be given unless advised by the police. All actions will ensure the best evidence is preserved for any criminal proceedings while at the same time safeguarding the rights of the adult.

The police will be asked for advice before any internal investigation or disciplinary action is taken by CGS to ensure any ongoing criminal investigation is not jeopardised.

Precautionary Suspension

A risk assessment should be carried out to determine if the person who is the subject of the concern needs to be suspended on a precautionary basis. Consideration will need to be given as to whether they should be removed from their current duties or restrictions put in place whilst the investigation takes place. Suspension will be carried out in line with CGS's disciplinary procedures. The adult will be informed in writing of the reason for the suspension (within the confines of sharing information). Suspension is not a form of disciplinary action.

Support for the Person Subject of the Concern

An adult who is precautionarily suspended will be kept regularly updated about their suspension and will also have regular contact with their named support person. They will be supported during this time by a relevant other person in CGS who is separate from the investigator and disciplinary manager. This will allow the person to be signposted to relevant support services and to be kept updated with the basic progress of the investigation and disciplinary hearing process.

Support should be guided by the individual circumstance and led by the person's needs. There should also be support for specific consideration for attending a disciplinary hearing if necessary.

Non-recent Allegations of Abuse

Allegations of abuse 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 and young people. In the event of an allegation of non-recent abuse, and where CGS deems there to be a potential current risk to children or young people, the police should be informed.

An adult sharing an allegation of non-recent abuse should also be supported to speak to the police if they wish to do so.

Staff Member/Volunteer Considered for Listing

If CGS is notified that a member of staff in a regulated role is under consideration for listing by Disclosure Scotland, a precautionary suspension should be put in place pending the outcome. A suspension is not a form of disciplinary action.

When disciplinary action is taken against someone in regulated work as a result of harmful behaviour towards a child/young person, CGS has a legal duty to refer the member of staff/volunteer to Disclosure Scotland so that consideration can be given to whether that individual should be barred from any kind of regulated work with children and young people.

A referral must be made if the member of staff/volunteer:

- Has been dismissed.
- Would have been dismissed as a result of the incident had they not resigned, retired or been made redundant.
- Has been transferred to a position that is not regulated work with children and young people.
- 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,
- Would have been dismissed or considered for dismissal had the contract not expired.

It is an offence NOT to refer an individual when the criteria have been met. For detailed guidance on this see <https://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk/protectionservices/referralprocess.htm> and contact safeguarding@teamsotland.scot

Further guidance and support is available from:

Child Wellbeing & Protection Officer at CGS.

T: 07766602368
E: safeguarding@teamsotland.scot

Children First:

T: 0141 419 1156
E: cwps@childrenfirst.org.uk
W: [Children First Child Wellbeing and Protection in Sport | Children First](#)

Media

All media enquiries relating to the conduct of a CGS volunteers/staff should be referred to the CGS's nominated representative – e.g. Head of Marketing and Communications/Chief Executive. It is advisable to seek support from the CGS Wellbeing and Child Protection Officer.

Any serious breach of the code of conduct should be dealt with under CGS's disciplinary procedure. Where child abuse is alleged or suspected the matter must be handed over to the police for investigation.

Case Review Procedure

1. Purpose of Case Review

Reviewing how child/young person wellbeing and protection concerns have been managed is an important part of good practice and risk management. It provides an opportunity to establish whether there are lessons to be learned about the ways in which a concern has been investigated and responded to.

2. Deciding to conduct a Case Review

CGS will follow the criteria set out below when considering and establishing a case for review:

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

A case deemed eligible for review may be a particular concern or matter or, in some cases, may be cumulative concerns.

The CGS Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer may, internally, take a sample of cases to review to ensure the level of the service provided in case management is consistent and to highlight any learning to take forward into future cases.

3. Identifying who undertakes the review

CGS Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer will appoint a case reviewer, who may be internal or external to CGS. The case reviewer, whether internal or external, will have expertise in the area of concern. These skills may differ according to the circumstances of each case and the agreed role of the case reviewer.

4. Timescales for review

It is desirable that the case review should be undertaken as soon as feasible and all cases will aim to be reviewed within an 8 week period from the point the case reviewer has been appointed and received all evidence and correspondence relating to the case.

5. First steps of the review

After an individual has been identified, the case reviewer will give consideration to any outstanding investigations or ongoing proceedings. These considerations will be:

- Is there a Police and/or Social Work protection investigation still ongoing?
- Is there a criminal investigation by the Police still ongoing?
- Are there any legal proceedings in relation to the case?

If the answer to any of these questions is yes, the review cannot proceed until the above have concluded.

6. Other considerations

If the review can proceed, the case reviewer will consider how people may feel about the case being reviewed and the possible impact it could have.

Throughout the whole case review, the case reviewer will make a record of the review and their

findings. This may not be a lengthy record of the review and their findings. This may not be a lengthy report, although a full report may be appropriate in certain circumstances. Generally, any record of a review should contain the following information:

- The source of the concern.
- The nature of the concern
- A chronology of events, individuals and organisations involved
- Action taken
- 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.

Appendix 12 is a Case Review Procedure Process.

In all matters of Child Welfare and Protection, please contact the CGS Child Wellbeing & Protection Officer for advice and guidance on 07766602368 or safeguarding@teamsotland.scot