



Bromborough Bulldogs Safeguarding Adults Policy

1. Purpose and Commitment

Bromborough Bulldogs is committed to protecting all adults from abuse, neglect, exploitation and poor practice. We will promote a safe, inclusive environment, recognise safeguarding concerns and act promptly on concerns arising within the club, sporting environment or wider community. Bromborough Bulldogs is committed to creating a culture of zero-tolerance of harm to adults which necessitates: the recognition of adults who may be at risk and the circumstances which may increase risk; knowing how adult abuse, exploitation or neglect manifests itself; and being willing to report safeguarding concerns.

2. Safeguarding Principles

Our approach is based on the Care Act (2014) principles of empowerment, prevention, proportionality, protection, partnership and accountability. Adults will be treated with dignity and respect, supported to make informed choices, and involved in decisions about their safety wherever possible.

3. Responsibilities and Commitments

- Ensure everyone involved with Bromborough Bulldogs knows how to recognise and report safeguarding concerns.
- Take all concerns seriously, respond promptly and put the wellbeing and wishes of the adult first, subject to legal and safety requirements.
- Maintain accurate, confidential records and store information securely in accordance with data protection requirements.
- Use appropriate recruitment, safeguarding training and welfare arrangements, including a designated Safeguarding/Welfare Officer at events.
- Work with the Local Authority, Police and other relevant agencies where required and share information appropriately.
- Review this policy at least every two years and sooner where legislation, guidance or circumstances change.

4. Legal and Policy Framework

This policy is informed by the Care Act 2014 and Care and Support Statutory Guidance, Mental Capacity Act 2005, Human Rights Act 1998, Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR, together with relevant safeguarding guidance and requirements applicable to sport.

5. Adult at Risk and Types of Abuse

Under the Care Act, an adult at risk is an adult aged 18 or over who has care and support needs, is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect, and, because of those needs, is unable to protect themselves from that risk.

Abuse may be physical, sexual, psychological/emotional, financial or material, discriminatory, organisational, neglect or acts of omission, self-neglect, domestic abuse or modern slavery. Relevant safeguarding concerns may also include forced marriage, cyberbullying, mate crime, radicalisation, exploitation and hate crime.

6. Signs and indicators of abuse and neglect

The signs and symptoms include but are not limited to:

- Unexplained bruises or injuries – or lack of medical attention when an injury is present
- Person has belongings or money going missing
- Person is not attending / no longer enjoying their sessions. You may notice that a participant in a team has been missing from practice sessions and is not responding to reminders from team members or coaches
- Someone losing or gaining weight / an unkempt appearance. This could be a player whose appearance becomes unkempt, does not wear suitable sports kit and there is a deterioration in hygiene
- A change in the behaviour or confidence of a person. For example, a participant may be looking quiet and withdrawn when one person comes to collect them from sessions in contrast to with someone else whom they greet with a smile.
- Self-harm
- A fear of a particular group of people or individual
- A parent/carer always speaks for the person and doesn't allow them to make their own choices
- They may tell you / another person they are being abused – i.e. a disclosure

7. Reporting and Responding to Concerns

- Report any concern, suspicion or disclosure to the Bromborough Bulldogs Safeguarding Team or Club Welfare Officer.
- If an adult is in immediate danger, contact the Police immediately.
- Listen carefully, remain calm, do not investigate or make judgements, and record what was said as accurately as possible using the person's own words.
- Record the circumstances, distinguishing fact, observation, allegation and opinion, and submit the appropriate incident form.
- Keep information confidential and share it only with those who need to know.
- Respect the adult's wishes and consent wherever possible. Information may be shared without consent where necessary to protect the adult or others, where the adult lacks capacity, where there is serious crime, coercion or another legal/public-interest basis.
- Record decisions about sharing or not sharing information and seek advice from the Safeguarding Team where unsure.

8. Person-Centred Safeguarding and Mental Capacity

Safeguarding should be person-centred and focused on the outcomes the adult wants to achieve. Adults should be supported to make their own decisions, including decisions others may consider unwise. Where an adult cannot make a particular decision at the relevant time, decisions must follow the principles of the Mental Capacity Act, including support to decide, best interests and the least restrictive option. If someone has difficulty making their views and wishes known, then they can be supported or represented by an advocate. This might be a safe family member or friend of their choice or a professional advocate (usually from a third sector organisation).

9. Good Practice

- Treat all adults fairly and with dignity, respect and appropriate attention.
- Maintain professional boundaries and appropriate relationships.
- Avoid unnecessary or inappropriate physical contact and ensure any necessary contact is appropriate, explained and consensual.
- Avoid situations where a coach or volunteer is unnecessarily alone with an adult at risk.
- Ensure training and competition demands are appropriate to the individual's needs and wellbeing.
- Maintain appropriate records relating to injuries, medical needs, consent and relevant activities.
- Ensure appropriate first-aid arrangements and safeguarding training are in place.

10. Poor Practice

Poor practice includes unnecessary one-to-one situations, inappropriate touching or language, sexually suggestive comments, rough or provocative behaviour, humiliating or controlling an adult, ignoring allegations, inappropriate private contact or transport arrangements, and undertaking personal care that an adult can manage themselves.

11. Roles, Reporting and Review

Bromborough Bulldogs will maintain a clear safeguarding lead and reporting structure, procedures for managing allegations against staff and volunteers, appropriate case management and whistleblowing arrangements, and effective links with external safeguarding agencies. Staff and volunteers are encouraged to make a neutral report where they believe their own conduct or a situation could reasonably be misunderstood or falls below expected standards.

12. How to record a disclosure

- Make a note of what the person has said using his or her own words as soon as practicable. Complete an Incident Form and submit to the Bromborough Bulldogs Safeguarding Team or Welfare Officer
- As long as it does not increase the risk to the individual, you should explain to them that it is your duty to share your concern with the Safeguarding Team or Welfare Officer
- Describe the circumstances in which the disclosure came about
- Take care to distinguish between fact, observation, allegation and opinion. It is important that the information you have is accurate
- Be mindful of the need to be confidential at all times, this information must only be shared with you the Safeguarding team or Welfare Officer and others on a need-to-know basis

The circumstances when we need to share information without the adult's consent include those where:

- It is not safe to contact the adult to gain their consent – i.e. it might put them or the person making contact at further risk
- You believe they or someone else is at risk, including children
- You believe the adult is being coerced or is under duress
- It is necessary to contact the police to prevent a crime, or to report that a serious crime has been committed
- The adult does not have mental capacity to consent to information being shared about them
- The person causing harm has care and support needs
- The concerns are about an adult at risk living in Wales or Northern Ireland (where there is a duty to report to the Local Authority)

When information is shared without the consent of the adult this must be explained to them, when it is safe to do so, and any further actions should still fully include them.

If you are in doubt as to whether to share information, seek advice from the Bromborough Bulldogs safeguarding team.

Any decision to share or not to share information with an external person or organisation must be recorded together with the reasons to share or not share information.

13. Roles and responsibilities of those within Bromborough Bulldogs

Bromborough Bulldogs is committed to having the following in place as required:

- A Lead Safeguarding/Welfare Officer to produce and disseminate guidance and resources to support the policy and procedures
- A clear line of accountability within the organisation for work on promoting the welfare of all adults
- Procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse or poor practice against members of staff and volunteers.
- A Case Management Group that effectively deals with issues, manages concerns and refers to a disciplinary panel where necessary (i.e. where concerns arise about the behaviour of someone within Bromborough Bulldogs)
- Arrangements are in place to work effectively with other organisations to safeguard and promote the welfare of adults, including arrangements for sharing information
- Appropriate whistle blowing procedures and an open and inclusive culture that enables safeguarding and equality and diversity issues to be addressed.

Policy review: At least every two years, or sooner where required by changes in legislation, guidance or organisational circumstances.

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