

SWERVE SOCCER SAFEGUARDING POLICY

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28 Wilton Road, Bexhill-on-Sea, TN401EZ, United Kingdom

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Policy statement/aims

Swerve Soccer Camps has a duty of care to safeguard all children involved in Swerve Soccer Camps from harm. All children have a right to protection, and the needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account. Swerve Soccer Camps will ensure the safety and protection of all children involved in Swerve Soccer Camps through adherence to the Child Protection guidelines adopted by Swerve Soccer Camps.

A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989).

Policy aims

The aim of the Swerve Soccer Camps Child Protection Policy is to promote good practice:

- providing children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of Swerve Soccer.
- allow all staff /volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.

Promoting good practice

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 the appropriate 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 will have regular contact with young people and be an important link in identifying cases where they need protection. All suspicious cases of poor practice should be reported following the guidelines in this document.

When a child enters the club activity having been subjected to child abuse outside the sporting environment, sport can play a crucial role in improving the child's self-esteem. In such instances the club activity organiser must work with the appropriate agencies to ensure the child receives the required support.

Good practice guidelines

- All personnel should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to promote children's welfare and reduce the likelihood of allegations being made. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

Good practice means:

- Always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets).
- Treating all young people/disabled 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 players (e.g. it is not appropriate for staff or volunteers 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 sport fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play.
- Ensuring that if any form of manual/physical support is required, it should be provided openly. Care is needed, as it is difficult to maintain hand positions when the child is constantly moving. Young people and their parents should always be consulted and their agreement gained.

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- Keeping up to date with technical skills, qualifications and insurance in sport.
- Involving parents/carers wherever possible. For example, encouraging them to take responsibility for their children in the changing rooms. If groups have to be supervised in the changing rooms, always ensure parents, teachers, coaches or officials work in pairs.
- Ensuring that if mixed teams are taken away, they should always be accompanied by a male and female member of staff. However, remember that same gender abuse can also occur.
- Ensuring that at tournaments or residential events, adults should not enter children's rooms or invite children into their rooms. Children are also not permitted to 'room-share' with other children more than two years apart.
- Being an excellent role model - this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people.
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people and disabled adults - avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will.
- Securing parental consent in writing to act in loco parentis, if the need arises to administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment.
- Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.
- Requesting written parental consent if club officials are required to transport young people in their cars.

Not To Do

The following should be avoided except in emergencies. If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable it should be with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge in the club or the child's parents. For example, 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:

- avoid spending time alone with children away from others
- avoid taking or dropping off a child to an event or activity.
- Practices 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 child
 - allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
 - allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
 - make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
 - reduce a child to tears as a form of control
 - fail to act upon and record any allegations made by a child
 - do things of a personal nature for children or disabled adults, that they can do for themselves
 - invite or allow children to stay with you at your home unsupervised.
- Swerve Soccer will never give corporal punishment to a child

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.

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Incidents that must be reported/recorded

If any of the following occur you should report this immediately to the appropriate officer and record the incident. You should also ensure the parents of the child are informed:

- 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.

Use of photographic/filming equipment at sporting events

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. All clubs should be vigilant and any concerns should be reported to Oliver Davies (Lead Safeguard Officer). There is no intention to prevent club coaches and teachers using video equipment as a legitimate coaching aid. However, performers and their parents/carers should be made aware that this is part of the coaching programme and their consent obtained, and such films should be stored safely.

Recruitment and training of staff and volunteers

Swerve Soccer Camps recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children in some way and that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children. Preselection checks must include the following:

- All volunteers/staff should complete an application form. The application form will elicit information about an applicant's past and a self disclosure about any criminal record.
- Consent should be obtained from an applicant to seek information from the Disclosure and Barring Service.
- Two confidential references, including one regarding previous work with children. These references must be taken up and confirmed through telephone contact.
- Evidence of identity (passport or driving licence with photo).
- Shortlisted candidates will be informed that online searches may be done as part of our recruitment process.

Interview and induction

All employees (and volunteers) will be required to undergo an interview carried out to acceptable protocol and recommendations. All employees and volunteers should receive an induction, during which:

- A check should be made that the application form has been completed in full (including sections on criminal records, self-disclosures and additional checks for those that have been working abroad).
- Their qualifications should be substantiated.
- The job requirements and responsibilities should be clarified.
- Child protection procedures are explained and training needs are identified.
- They should sign up to the organisation's Code of Ethics and Conduct and Child Protection policy.
- All staff and volunteers will be subject to a 12-week probationary period

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Training

In addition to preselection checks, the safeguarding process includes training after recruitment to help staff and volunteers to:

- Analyse their own practice against established good practice, and to ensure their practice is not likely to result in allegations being made.
- Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice or possible abuse.
- Respond to concerns expressed by a child or young person.
- Work safely effectively with children.

Swerve Soccer requires:

- Coaching staff to attend a recognised 3-hour good practice and child protection awareness training workshop, to ensure their practice is exemplary and to facilitate the development of a positive culture towards good practice and child protection.
- Non-coaching staff and volunteers to complete a recognised awareness training on child protection.
- Relevant personnel to receive advisory information outlining good practice and informing them about what to do if they have concerns about the behaviour of an adult towards a young person.
- Relevant personnel to gain a national first aid training (where necessary).
- Attend update training when necessary. Information about meeting training needs can be obtained from Sports Coach UK, the NSPCC, and the Sport Council.

Responding to allegations or suspicions

It is not the responsibility of anyone working in Swerve Soccer, in a paid or unpaid capacity to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However there is a responsibility to act on any concerns by reporting these to the appropriate officer or the appropriate authorities. Swerve Soccer will assure all staff/volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports his or her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child.

Swerve Soccer will ensure staff feel comfortable to discuss matters they are worried may have safeguarding implications, including things they may have seen or heard online.

Where there is a complaint against a member of staff there may be three types of investigation:

- a criminal investigation
- a child protection investigation
- a disciplinary or misconduct investigation.

The results of the police and child protection investigation may well influence and inform the disciplinary investigation, but all available information will be used to reach a decision.

Reporting concerns about poor practice

If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice the designated/Club Child Protection Officer will deal with it as a misconduct issue. If the allegation is about poor practice by the Swerve Soccer Child Protection Officer, or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to the relevant FA association officer who will decide how to deal with the allegation and whether or not to initiate disciplinary proceedings.

Reporting concerns about suspected abuse

Any suspicion that a child has been abused by either a member of staff or a volunteer should be reported to the Swerve Soccer Child Protection Officer, who will take such steps as considered

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necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk. The Swerve Soccer Child Protection Officer will refer the allegation to the social services department who may involve the police. The parents or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social services department. Swerve Soccer Child Protection Officer should also notify the relevant FA Association officer who in turn will inform the Child Protection Officer who will deal with any media enquiries.

If Swerve Soccer Child Protection Officer is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to the appropriate Manager or in his/her absence the FA Association Child Protection Officer who will refer the allegation to Social Services. If you are concerned about a child and unable to contact the designated person in your organisation, please call the NSPCC on 0808 800 5000.

Domestic Abuse

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child to parent abuse. Domestic abuse can be psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional. It can impact children through seeing, hearing or experiencing the effects of domestic abuse and/or experiencing it through their own intimate relationships. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. The government has issued statutory guidance to provide further information for those working with domestic abuse victims and perpetrators, including the impact on children. All children can witness and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members. Experiencing domestic abuse can have a serious, long lasting emotional and psychological impact on children. In some cases, a child may blame themselves for the abuse or may have had to leave the family home as a result. Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child-on-child abuse is sometimes referred to as 'teenage relationship abuse'. Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be recognised in law under the statutory definition of 'domestic abuse' (if one or both parties are under 16). However, as with any child under 18, where there are concerns about safety or welfare, child safeguarding procedures should be followed and both young victims and young perpetrators should be offered support.

Child-on-child abuse

This is a term used to describe children abusing other children. Child-on-child abuse can include:

- bullying (including online bullying and bullying because of someone's race, religion, sexuality, disability or trans status)
- abuse by your girlfriend, boyfriend or partner
- physical abuse
- sexual violence, such as rape and sexual assault
- sexual harassment
- sharing naked or semi-naked photos or videos without permission
- upskirting
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals to harass, abuse and humiliate
- emotional abuse
- financial abuse
- coercive control
- Spotting the signs
- Things to look out for if you suspect a child is a victim of Child-on-child abuse:
- absence from school or lack of interest in school activities
- physical injuries which can't be explained

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- mental or emotional health issues
- becoming withdrawn or showing a lack of self esteem
- lack of sleep
- alcohol or substance misuse
- sudden changes in behaviour
- inappropriate behaviour
- showing harmful behaviour towards others or self (self-harm, violent outburst
- If you suspect that Child-on-child abuse is taking place, you should report it to the DSL.

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 Club Child Protection Officer
- the parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused
- the person making the allegation
- social services/police
- the Swerve Soccer Camps Regional Development Manager and FA Association Child Protection Officer
- Seek social services advice on who should approach the alleged abuser (or parents if the alleged abuser is a child).
- 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).
- Enquiries and further action

Internal enquiries and possible suspension

Swerve Soccer Child Protection Officer will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and social services inquiries. Irrespective of the findings of the social services or police inquiries Swerve Soccer Camps Disciplinary Committee will assess all 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, Swerve Soccer Camps disciplinary Committee 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 the child should remain of paramount importance throughout.

Support to deal with the aftermath of abuse

Consideration should be given to the kind of support that children, parents and members of staff may need. Use of helplines, support groups and open meetings will maintain an open culture and help the healing process. The British Association for Counselling Directory is available from The British Association for Counselling, 1 Regent Place, Rugby CV21 2PJ, Tel: 01788 550899, Fax: 01788 562189, E-mail: bac@bacp.co.uk, Internet:www.bacp.co.uk. Consideration should be given to what kind of support may be appropriate for the alleged perpetrator.

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 child 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 above and report the matter to the social services or the police. 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

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automatically excluded from working with children. This is reinforced by the details of the Protection of Children Act 1999.

Bullying

Every child has the right to experience sport in a safe environment free from abuse and bullying. Sports organisations play an important role in creating a positive club ethos that challenges bullying by empowering young people to understand the impact of bullying, how best to deal with it and agree standards of behaviour.

Reporting concerns outside the immediate sporting environment (e.g. a parent or carer). Report your concerns to the Club Child Protection Officer, who should contact social services or the police as soon as possible. If the Club Child Protection Officer is not available, the person being told of or discovering the abuse should contact social services or the police immediately. Social Services and the Club Child Protection Officer will decide how to involve the parents/carers. The Club Child Protection Officer should also report the incident to Swerve Soccer Camps Governing Body. The Governing Body should ascertain whether or not the person/s involved in the incident play a role in Swerve Soccer Camps and act accordingly. Maintain confidentiality on a need to know basis only

LGBTQ

LGBTQ+ children and young people face the same risks as all children and young people, but they are at greater risk of some types of abuse. For example, they might experience homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying or hate crime. They might also be more vulnerable to or at greater risk of sexual abuse, online abuse or sexual exploitation. LGBTQ+ stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning and more. This term covers a broad range of people who have different lived experiences and may be at different stages in exploring their identity. It includes people who are asexual or have differences in sex development (sometimes known as being intersex). Adults who work with LGBTQ+ children and young people need to understand the challenges they might experience and know what action to take to support and help keep them safe.

Research suggests that LGBTQ+ children and young people might be at higher risk than their non-LGBTQ+ peers of:

- self-harm
- experiencing suicidal thoughts and feelings
- anxiety
- depression

- There are some factors that might mean LGBTQ+ children and young people feel less able to speak out about any worries or negative experiences they're having.
- Barriers include:
 - worrying that telling someone will 'out' them before they're ready
 - fearing that it will make the bullying or abuse worse
 - thinking no one will believe them
 - feeling they are to blame for what they're experiencing
 - worrying that adults will think their gender identity or sexuality is to blame for their experience of abuse

Bullying

Homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) bullying is based on prejudice or negative attitudes about gay, lesbian bisexual or transgender people. This can include name calling, using offensive

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language and negative stereotyping. Bullying can happen anywhere, including at home, at school or online (cyberbullying).

Staff should be made aware of any issues surrounding LGBTQ students and inform the LSO.

Editing and storage of photographs

All images taken by members of staff or volunteers at Swerve Soccer remain the property of the Swerve Soccer

Swerve Soccer endeavours to take a common sense approach to parents' use of photography. It is important that the company ensures that children at a venue are safe and that an individual's right to privacy is respected. Within this context, the company also understands that it is natural for parents to want to record their children's successes and special moments for family posterity. In order to strike an appropriate balance, the company asks that parents respect the following rules:

- No video to be taken without the express permission of the company director
- Photographs may be taken for private, family use at designated Swerve Soccer event only
- and at the locations designated for those events
- No child must feature in any photographs where parental consent has been withdrawn – the company holds a list of such pupils
- No child should be identifiable by name in photographs
- Photographs containing other people's children must not be posted on social networking sites or online
- Photographs must not embarrass the company or the children

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Use of physical restraint

Physical restraint should be applied as an act of care and control with the intention of re-establishing verbal control as soon as possible and, at the same time, allowing the child to regain self-control. It should never take a form which could be seen as a punishment. Staff are authorised to use reasonable force only in applying physical restraint, although there is no absolute definition of this, as what constitutes reasonable force depends upon the particular situation and the child to whom it is being applied. However, as a general rule, only the force necessary to stop or prevent the behaviour should be used, in accordance with the guidelines below.

When physical restraint becomes necessary:

DO

- Tell the child what you are doing and why
- Use the minimum force necessary
- Involve another member of staff if possible
- Tell the child what s/he must do for you to remove the restraint (this may need frequent repetition)
- Use simple and clear language
- Hold limbs above a major joint if possible e.g. above the elbow
- Relax your restraint in response to the pupil's compliance

DON'T

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- Act in temper (involve another staff member if you fear loss of control)
- Involve yourself in a prolonged verbal exchange with the child
- Attempt to reason with the child
- Involve other children in the restraint
- Touch or hold the child in sexual areas
- Twist or force limbs back against a joint
- Bend fingers or pull hair
- Hold the child in a way which will restrict blood flow or breathing e.g. around the neck
- Slap, punch, kick or trip up the pupil.

When might it be appropriate to use reasonable force?

Examples of situations that may require restraint are when:

- a child attacks a member of staff, or another child
- children fighting
- a child is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials, substances or objects
- a child is trying to leave the venue
- a child persistently refuses to obey an order to leave an area
- a child behaves in such a way that seriously disrupts a lesson.

Providing information to police or social services

Information about suspected abuse must be accurate and a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern. It should include the following:

- The child's name, age and date of birth of the child.
- The child's home address and telephone number.
- Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else.
- The nature of the allegation. Include dates, times, any special factors and other relevant information.
- Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Also any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes.
- Details of witnesses to the incidents.
- The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred.
- Have the parents been contacted?
- If so what has been said?
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so record details.
- If the child was not the person who reported the incident, has the child been spoken to? If so what was said?
- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details.
- Where possible referral to the police or social services should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours and the name of the contact who took the referral should be recorded.
- If you have any concerns about a child or young person call the NSPCC on 0800 800 5000, text 88858 or visit www.nspcc.org.uk for immediate advice.

Reviewed by: Hannah Fraser

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