STOOLBALL ENGLAND

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN & ADULTS AT RISK

POLICY AND PROCEDURES (2026 MASTER VERSION)

Organisation: Stoolball England
Applicable to: Stoolball England, affiliated clubs, Board members, elected officers, volunteers, freelance and self-employed coaches, officials and delivery partners
Effective From: January 2026
Policy Owner: Safeguarding & Welfare Lead
Approved By: Board
Approval Date: January 2026
Version: 1.0 (2026 Governance Suite)
Next Review: January 2027
Review Cycle: Annual

1. SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

Stoolball England is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and adults at risk who participate in stoolball.

The welfare of children is paramount.

Adults at risk are entitled to live free from abuse, harm and neglect.

Stoolball England recognises its responsibility to take all reasonable steps to protect individuals from harm and to create a safe and inclusive environment across all levels of the sport.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- Children (anyone under the age of 18)
- Adults at risk (as defined by the Care Act 2014)
- All Board members and elected officers
- All volunteers, coaches (including freelance and self-employed), officials and staff
- All affiliated clubs and delivery partners
- All activities, competitions, events and programmes organised or sanctioned by Stoolball England

3. LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

This policy is informed by and complies with (as amended):

- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children

- Care Act 2014
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Police Act 1997
- DBS Code of Practice
- Equality Act 2010
- UK GDPR
- Data Protection Act 2018
- CPSU Safeguarding Standards for Sport
- Sport England Code for Sports Governance

4. DEFINITIONS

Child

Any person under the age of 18.

Adult at Risk

An adult aged 18 or over who:

- Has care and support needs
- Is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect
- Is unable to protect themselves from that abuse or neglect because of those needs

5. TYPES OF ABUSE

5.1 Children

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Bullying and cyberbullying
- Exploitation

5.2 Adults at Risk

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological or emotional abuse
- Financial or material abuse

- Discriminatory abuse
- Organisational abuse
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Domestic abuse
- Self-neglect

6. SAFER RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING

Stoolball England operates safer recruitment practices including role assessment, Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks where required, references, self-disclosure and appropriate training.

This policy must be read alongside:

- Recruitment & Selection Policy (2026)
- Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy (2026)
- Storage, Handling, Use, Retention and Disposal of Disclosure Information Policy (2026)
- Disciplinary Policy & Procedures (2026)

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

7.1 Board

The Board will:

- Provide safeguarding oversight and accountability
- Ensure adequate safeguarding resources
- Receive safeguarding reports as appropriate
- Review this policy annually
- Seek assurance that affiliated clubs are compliant

7.2 Safeguarding & Welfare Lead

Responsible for:

- Overall operational safeguarding leadership
- Receiving and managing concerns
- Liaising with statutory agencies
- Maintaining secure safeguarding records
- Providing guidance to clubs

7.3 Club Safeguarding Officers

Responsible for:

- Acting as first point of contact at club level
- Promoting safe practice
- Reporting concerns promptly to Stoolball England

7.4 Volunteers, Coaches and Officials

All individuals have a duty to:

- Safeguard children and adults at risk
- Adhere to the Code of Conduct
- Report concerns immediately

8. CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING

Information will be shared on a strict need-to-know basis and in accordance with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Safeguarding concerns override confidentiality where necessary to protect individuals from harm.

9. RECORD KEEPING

Safeguarding records must be:

- Accurate
- Factual
- Dated and signed
- Stored securely
- Accessible only to authorised individuals

10. MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy will be:

- Reviewed annually
- Reviewed following significant safeguarding incidents
- Monitored through audits and club compliance checks
- Reported to the Board as part of safeguarding assurance

11. PROCEDURES – RESPONDING TO SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

11.1 If You Have a Concern

- Act immediately if someone is at risk of harm
- Ensure the individual is safe
- Do not investigate
- Record the concern accurately
- Report immediately to the Safeguarding & Welfare Lead
- In an emergency, contact 999

11.2 Responding to a Disclosure

- Listen carefully and stay calm
- Reassure the individual
- Do not promise confidentiality
- Do not ask leading questions
- Record what is said using the individual's own words
- Report immediately

11.3 Managing Allegations Against Staff, Volunteers or Board Members

- Treat all allegations seriously
- Assess immediate risk
- Refer to statutory agencies where required
- Liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where applicable
- Follow the Disciplinary Policy & Procedures (2026)

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Roles and Responsibilities Summary

(Summary table of Board, Safeguarding & Welfare Lead, Club Safeguarding Officer and Volunteer responsibilities)

Appendix 2 – Reporting and Escalation Pathway

1. Concern identified
2. Immediate safety action if required
3. Report to Safeguarding & Welfare Lead
4. Referral to statutory agencies where necessary
5. Ongoing monitoring and support

Appendix 3 – Club Implementation Requirements

Affiliated clubs must:

- Appoint a Club Safeguarding Officer

- Adopt this policy or an aligned local safeguarding policy
- Ensure safeguarding training is completed
- Follow safer recruitment procedures
- Report concerns promptly

Appendix 4 – Training Expectations

- Safeguarding training for all volunteers and coaches
- Enhanced training for safeguarding officers
- Refresher training at least every three years

Appendix 5 – Board Assurance Statement

This policy demonstrates Stoolball England's commitment to safeguarding and compliance with statutory guidance, CPSU standards and Sport England governance expectations.

Appendix 6 – One-Page Safeguarding Summary for Clubs

Everyone involved in stoolball has a responsibility to safeguard children and adults at risk.

If you are worried about someone:

- Take it seriously
- Act immediately if there is danger
- Do not investigate yourself
- Do not promise confidentiality
- Record what you see or hear
- Report it immediately

Report to:

- Your Club Safeguarding Officer
- Or directly to the Safeguarding & Welfare Lead

In an emergency, call 999.

Appendix 7 – Safeguarding Reporting Flow (Text Version)

1. Concern identified (disclosure, observation or information received)
2. Immediate risk?
    - Yes → Contact emergency services
    - No → Continue
3. Report immediately to Safeguarding & Welfare Lead
4. Decision on referral to statutory agencies
5. Outcome recorded and monitored

Appendix 8 – Code of Conduct (Safeguarding Extract)

All volunteers, coaches and officials must:

- Treat everyone with respect and dignity
- Maintain appropriate boundaries
- Avoid situations where they are alone with a child or adult at risk
- Never engage in abusive or discriminatory behaviour
- Report safeguarding concerns promptly

Breaches may result in disciplinary action.

Appendix 9 – Board-Level Safeguarding Oversight

The Board will:

- Receive safeguarding reports as appropriate
- Ensure adequate resources
- Review policy annually
- Seek assurance of club compliance

Appendix 10 – Safeguarding Review & Audit Cycle

- Annual policy review
- Annual club compliance checks
- Case review following significant incidents
- Board reporting as required

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Version: 1.0
Suite: 2026 Governance & Safeguarding Framework
Status: Approved
Owner: Safeguarding & Welfare Lead
Next Scheduled Review: January 2027