



Sheffield Bridge Club: Safeguarding Children – Policy Statement.

Sheffield Bridge Club (SBC) organises Bridge events at its home venue and works with the English Bridge Union (EBU), English Bridge Education and Development (EBED) and Yorkshire Contract Bridge Association (YCBA) to develop the game. The SBC seeks to promote and develop Bridge. It acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people aged up to 18 years as well as vulnerable adults and is committed to ensuring safeguarding that reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice.

The policy recognises that the welfare and interests of children and young people are paramount in all circumstances as enshrined in the Children Act 1989. It aims to ensure that regardless of age, gender, religion or beliefs, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation or identity, or socioeconomic background, all children:

- have a positive and enjoyable experience of bridge in a safe and child-friendly environment.
- are protected from harm and abuse whilst participating in bridge or outside of the activity.

SBC acknowledges that some children, including disabled children and young people or those from ethnic minority communities, can be particularly vulnerable to abuse and we accept the responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare. As part of our safeguarding policy the SBC will:

- promote and prioritise the safety and well-being of children and young people
- value, listen to, and respect children and young people
- ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and is provided with appropriate learning opportunities to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and young people
- make clear who the designated Lead for Safeguarding and the Safeguarding Officer is/are and their roles.
- ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents/concerns of abuse and provide support to the individual(s) who raise or disclose the concern
- ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored
- prevent the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals
- ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation
- share concerns with agencies who need to know, involving parents and children appropriately.

The policy and procedures will be widely promoted and are mandatory for everyone involved at SBC.

Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the club.

Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely:

- The Children Act 2004
- What to do if you're worried a Child is being Abused March 2015
- Working Together to Safeguard Children July 2018 (A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children) updated July 2024
- Information Sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services May 2024
- Prevent Duty Guidance, Channel Guidance, and Prevent Departmental Advice, 2023
- The use of social media for online radicalisation July 2015

EBU: <https://www.ebu.co.uk/documents/official-documents/safeguarding-leaflet.pdf>
<https://www.ebu.co.uk/documents/official-documents/safeguarding-policy.pdf>

Monitoring

The policy will be reviewed annually, or in the following circumstances:

- Changes in legislation and/or government guidance
- As required by the Local Safeguarding Children Board or the SBC Committee
- As a result of any other significant change or event.

The SBC Safeguarding Policy has been drawn up in conjunction with the EBU Safeguarding Policy and Good Practice Guide.

Terminology:

A child is defined as anyone under the age of 18, in line with the Children Act 1989 and 2004.

The terms child and young person are used interchangeably in this document, and may also refer to vulnerable adults.

The term "parent" is used as a generic term to represent parents, carers and guardians. The term "bridge" is used to include Minibridge and all bridge-related activities.

POLICY PROCEDURES

1.Safeguarding Children/Child Protection

Safeguarding in this document means the process of protecting children and young people up to the age of 18 from harm. Harm can include deliberate abuse, neglect (deliberate or not), bullying, exclusion and prejudiced attitudes. Child protection is part of safeguarding and is the process of protecting individual children who are identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. This policy concentrates on the latter but acknowledges the principles of the former.

2.Disclosure and Barring Service

One part of risk assessment is deciding whether a Disclosure and Barring (DBS) check is required or whether other safeguarding measures put in place are sufficient. Not all staff or volunteers require a DBS check; indeed it is illegal to apply for a DBS check if the applicant's role is ineligible. (where a DBS is not required we will follow the Code of Conduct attached in Appendix 1). A DBS check can be applied for via the EBU office. We recommend that those applying for a DBS join the DBS Update Service (this service is free for volunteers) as this will mean that the DBS is transferable between organisations and is automatically updated rendering future applications for a DBS certificate unnecessary.

SBC recognises that its members, including its volunteers may work in schools and as part of the curriculum to teach bridge. SBC advises that in such circumstances those volunteers should follow the school's policies and procedures.

SBC has a Safeguarding Officer who has responsibility for providing advice and support to other staff, volunteers and members, and ensuring that safeguarding children remains a priority at SBC. A role description is included (Appendix 4). It is also recommended that SBC appoint a Deputy Safeguarding Officer in case the Safeguarding Officer is unavailable.

The Lead for Safeguarding for the EBU is:

Name: Abbey Smith

Contact: safeguarding@ebu.co.uk

The Safeguarding Officer for the SBC:

Name: Anne Camm

Contact: annecamm@hotmail.com

The Deputy Safeguarding Officer for the SBC:

Name: SBC Chairman

Contact: chair@sheffieldbridgeclub.co.uk

The safeguarding officer should undergo/have undergone at least "introductory" and preferably "leading on" safeguarding training or its equivalent so as to be able to undertake their role. Other staff and volunteers may also access appropriate training or non-accredited learning as part of individual safeguarding risk management if deemed appropriate by the Safeguarding Officer.

Training can be undertaken online e.g. via the NSPCC or SAFEcic or by personal attendance e.g. at a local school or training company. The local authority provides free/low cost training for voluntary groups. Online Training might be available, via (for example) educare.co.uk.

3. Recognising the signs and symptoms of abuse

Staff and volunteers are required to recognise signs and symptoms of abuse.

There are 4 main areas of abuse:

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect (intentional and unintentional)

These are explained in Appendix 4

Possible signs of abuse include:

Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries or the explanation of the cause of the injury is does not seem right.

- You observe or the child discloses abuse, or describes what appears to be an abusive act.

- Someone else (child or adult) expresses concern about the welfare of another child.
- Unexplained change in behaviour such as withdrawal or sudden outbursts of temper.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness or sexually explicit behaviour.
- Distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
- Difficulty in making friends.
- Eating disorders, depression, self-harm or suicide attempts.
- Becoming aware of a safeguarding issue

SBC recognises that there are many ways that an organisation or individual may become aware about a child or young person's safety.

For example:

- a third party or anonymous allegation is received.
- a child or young person's appearance, behaviour, play, drawing or statements cause suspicion of abuse and/or neglect.
- a child or young person reports an incident(s) of alleged abuse which occurred some time ago.
- a written report is made regarding the serious misconduct of a worker towards a child or young person.
- an incident is witnessed.
- a police charge is made.

No safeguarding issue will be ignored or dismissed by SBC as "minor".

4. Acting on a safeguarding issue

It is important that allegations are treated seriously and the EBU procedure includes recommendations to its member organisations as well as its own staff and volunteers:

Overview of actions if you have concerns about the welfare of a child:

- a) Is the child in immediate danger or are they injured? If yes - Contact the emergency services 999.

5. Report the concern:

It is important that there should be no delay in contacting either the Social Services or the police if someone thinks a crime may have been committed. Any individual can do this, 24 hours/day, it does not have to be the Safeguarding Officer.

If it is not thought that a crime has been committed but there is concern for a child's welfare then the issue should be reported to the Safeguarding Officer within 24 hours as per below.

The Safeguarding Officer will contact the local Children's Social Care Services (Social Services) for advice or make a referral in the first instance and follow up with a written report within 24 hours. If the Safeguarding Officer is not available the organiser or the individual raising the concern must do this. The Safeguarding Officer may in addition contact the EBU Safeguarding Officer for advice, however, this must not delay contacting Social Services.

If there is no one else available to help, contact the police 101.

Ensure you keep a record of your concern and how you reported it (see Concern/Allegation Report Form Appendix 2 (EBU)).

This form is to be completed by the person raising the concern. All information recorded is confidential.

Please note that parents/carers should not be spoken to if the discussions may put the child at risk of harm.

6. Safe Recruitment

SBC recognises that sometimes there are people who work, or seek to work with children and young people who may pose a risk to children and who may harm them. Ensuring that there is a clear process for recruiting volunteers should help reduce this risk.

7. Management and supervision of club members/volunteers

Club members/ volunteers will know who the Safeguarding Officer is and how to contact them if they have a concern.

Volunteers should be advised that they must follow the Child Protection Code of Conduct (See Appendix 1).

Volunteers will be advised that they are expected to make themselves aware of the organisation's child protection/safeguarding policy. They will be provided with a copy of the policy or given electronic access to it. A record should be kept that the copy/advice has been given.

8. Allegations against club members and volunteers

If an allegation of abuse (please see the definitions in Appendix 4) is made against club members or volunteers, this should be reported immediately to the Safeguarding Officer. If the allegation is about a senior committee member at the Club, then the incident may be passed to an alternative official

In all cases the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) should be involved in the immediate discussion with the Safeguarding Officer or the alternative official to confirm next steps. The LADO should be made aware of the incident within one working day.

The police and/or Children Social Care Service investigation takes precedence and no internal investigation may take place until the organisation has been advised they may do so by the LADO or police. When an internal investigation is undertaken, consideration should be given to the operation of disciplinary procedures. In most circumstances the options available for the Club are:

- no further action
- immediate suspension from the Club
- notifying the YCBA (which can then ensure that other clubs are aware of the situation)

The severity of the allegation, information and evidence available can often determine the next stages taken.

The SBC Conduct Committee will hear an appeal if required.

9. Recording and managing confidential information

A form for recording concerns/allegations of abuse, harm and neglect which is to be completed by the person raising the concern is included (Concern/Allegation Report Form Appendix 2 (EBU)).

Records relating to child protection may include:

- Safe recruitment documentation such as employment and engagement applications,
- references, identity verification, records of DBS or similar statutory disclosure checks.

The safeguarding/child protection policy and any revisions, records of distribution to or receipt of the policy, records of any protection policy training offered or received.

Accident records, incident records, records of concerns/allegations of abuse, harm and neglect (including actions taken such as referrals, assessments, plans and support), correspondence related to child protection.

Storage of records

Some best practice advice for when considering the storage of records:

- Information about concerns, allegations, and referrals should not be kept in one 'concern log' rather information or items relating to individuals need to be kept in separate files.
- Records of referrals to the Social Services and Police will be kept by those organisations.
- Files containing sensitive or confidential data should be locked away and access to the keys strictly controlled.
- Access to those records needs to be limited to people in named roles who either need to know about the information in those records and/or who manage the records/files.
- If records are stored electronically then password-protect those records, which only limited staff should have access to.
- Records are kept for an appropriate period from adoption of the policy.

Confidentiality

Children and young people have a right to confidentiality unless the organisation considers they could be at risk of abuse and/or harm. The legal principle is that the "welfare of the child is paramount". Privacy and confidentiality should be respected where possible but if doing this leaves a child at risk of harm then the child's safety has to come first. Legally, it is perfectly acceptable to share information if someone is worried about the safety of a child but only people who need to know should be told.

10. Distributing and reviewing the policy

The policy will be freely available to all members. It will be displayed on the SBC website; honorary officers and volunteer appointees will be made aware of this, its location and how to access it so that they can disseminate the information. A photocopy or electronic copy of the policy will be available from SBC on request.

A paper version of the policy will be available during all SBC events involving children, posted on the Club Noticeboard.

The policy will be reviewed annually by the SBC designated Safeguarding Officer signed by a member of the SBC Committee. In line with best practice a young person may be invited to be involved in the review.

11. Responsibilities of management committees

The SBC Committee is responsible for approving the SBC policy and its implementation in the SBC. It is also responsible for approving a review of the policy or delegating this to an appropriate official.

The SBC Committee is responsible for adding new procedures as required and informing its staff and volunteers of changes, which includes advertising it on its website.

The SBC has a responsibility to monitor which members and volunteers in their organisation have enhanced DBS checks and safeguarding training and advise those who may need it.

The SBC Committee has a responsibility to ensure the Safeguarding Officer undertakes periodic monitoring and review to ensure that safeguards are being implemented and are effective in the organisation and that risk is being managed.

12. Appendices

Appendix 1 SBC Child Protection Code of Conduct

Appendix 2 Concern/Report form

Appendix 3 SBC Safeguarding Officer – Role Description

Appendix 4 Recognising Child Abuse

Appendix 1 Sheffield Bridge Club Child Protection Code of Conduct for Honorary Officers and Volunteers

SBC recognises that its officials, teachers and volunteers, involved in bridge for children and young people have a great opportunity to be a positive role model and help build an individual's confidence. Staff and volunteers are expected to:

- Receive and read a copy of the Code of Conduct and provide a signature to acknowledge receipt.
- Ensure the safety of all children by providing effective supervision and proper planning of organised bridge activities.
- Encourage and guide participants to accept responsibility for their own performance and behaviour.
- Treat all young people fairly and ensure they feel valued and respected. Have no favourites.
- Not allow any bullying, or the use of bad language or inappropriate behaviour (by the children themselves or by adults playing in the environment).
- Appreciate the efforts of all young people and encourage sensible participation in bridge activities. Never exert undue influence over performers to obtain personal benefit or reward.
- Be positive, approachable and offer praise to promote the objectives of the club at all times.
- Not let any allegations of abuse of any kind or poor practice go unchallenged or unrecorded. Incidents and accidents to be recorded in line with the procedures of the EBU. Parents will be informed and accidents or incidents of alleged abuse or poor practice to the designated Safeguarding Officer.
- Administer minor first aid (if appropriate) in the presence of others and where required refer more serious incidents for/to medical assistance. Avoid administering First Aid involving the removing of children's clothing unless in the presence of others.
- Maintain confidentiality about sensitive information. Respect and listen to the opinions of young people.
- Develop an appropriate working relationship with participants, based on mutual trust and respect.
- Be a role model, displaying consistently high standard of behaviour and appearance (disciplined/committed/time keeping), remember children learn by example.
- Refrain from smoking and the consumption of alcohol in the presence of young persons.
- Avoid taking photos, especially of individuals, without express parental permission. Any such photo should not be stored permanently on electronic devices or phones, but should be deleted after use.
- Not accept or give individual gifts to young people without permission from parents/guardians.
- Not add young people to their social media accounts or have their mobile telephone numbers. Communication should be business-like, via home telephone numbers or email, copying in parents where possible.
- Plan activities that involve more than one other person being present, or at least, are within sight or hearing of others where possible.

Emergency action and first aid

Bridge Organisers and leaders should be prepared with an action plan in the event of an emergency. This will include as a minimum:

- Access to First Aid equipment and a first aid book and/or other similar resource
- Plan for actions if no qualified first aider is available
- Emergency evacuation plan
- Telephone contact if the participant is a minor for consent and information purposes (although prior consent for minor first aid may also be gained in addition to this)
- Telephone contact to the Emergency Services

Appendix 2 Concern/Allegation Report Form

Name of person reporting the concern/allegation

..... **Position**

If you have a concern or have received an allegation that relates to behaviour / actions towards a child or young person, please complete the following details:

Name of child/young person

Address

.....

Date of birth.....

If the concern or allegation relates to behaviour/actions of a person working with young people, please complete the following details:

Name of the youth worker

Address of the youth worker (if known).....

.....

Working relationship between youth worker and child/young person

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Date(s), time(s) and location(s) of the incident(s)

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Nature of the concern or allegation

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Observations made by you or to you (eg description of visible bruising, other injuries, child's emotional state etc. NB Please make a clear distinction between fact, opinion and hearsay.

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Exactly what the child/young person said, and what you said. (Remember, do not lead the child/young person you are questioning and record actual details

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Details of any witness(es) (Name(s), roles, contact details if possible)

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Actions taken so far

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Details of any External Agencies contacted:

1. Name of agency (please delete as appropriate): Police / Social Services / Local Authority / English Bridge Union / Other (eg NSPCC) – other please specify

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2. Date & time of contact

3. Name and contact number of person contacted

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4. Details of advice received

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Signed:

Print Name

Date

Remember to maintain confidentiality on a need to know basis.

Do not discuss this incident with anyone except to protect the child or young person.

Appendix 3 Safeguarding Officer – Role Description

Organisation: Sheffield Bridge Club

Reports to: SBC Committee

Voluntary Position

Requirement: Appointment is subject to a satisfactory enhanced DBS check if eligible and references. Legal background or safeguarding experience is highly desirable.

Purpose:

- To ensure that the SBC has appropriate arrangements for keeping children and young people safe.
- To promote the safety and welfare of children and young people.

Responsibilities:

- Ensure that all issues concerning safety and welfare of children and young people who attend SBC events are properly dealt with through policies, procedures and administrative systems.
- Ensure that everyone involved with SBC has access to the Child Safeguarding Policy and procedures and is aware of what they should do if they have concerns about a child.
- Receive, record and report information from anyone who has concerns about a child who attends a SBC associated event.
- Advise and support members and volunteers on safeguarding/child protection
- Undertake annual monitoring and review of the policy
- Assist with updating the policy in consultation with the Lead for Safeguarding
- Take the lead on dealing with information that may constitute a child protection concern or an allegation about a member of staff or volunteer. This includes assessing and clarifying the information, and taking decisions where in consultation with colleagues, the Lead for Safeguarding at EBU, Chair of the committee and statutory child protection agencies as required. Handle all information sensitively and confidentially.
- Consult with, pass on information to and receive information from statutory child protection agencies such as the local social care department and police. This includes making formal referrals to those agencies if required.
- Undertake “Duty to Refer” to the DBS if required
- Report to the Committee as required but at least once per year, on the level of risk management being achieved
- Be familiar with issues relating to safeguarding child protection and keep up to date with developments, via annual online updates.
- Attend training in issues relevant to child protection from time to time and share knowledge from that with other members of the SBC.

PHYSICAL ABUSE: May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent/carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE: Is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or "making fun" of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, (including cyber-bullying) causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

SEXUAL ABUSE: Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

NEGLECT: Is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE) and forms of so-called "honour based" violence including female genital mutilation (FGM) are child abuse, and domestic abuse and attempts to draw children into violent extremism should also be treated as safeguarding issues. If it is discovered that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18 it must be reported to the police.

SEXTING is a child protection issue. Even if explicit material is sent or elicited without malicious intent the consequences are serious and put those involved at risk of serious harm. Having or sending explicit material on digital devices is also a criminal offence for those under 18.

PEER ON PEER ABUSE Peer on peer abuse occurs when a young person is exploited, bullied and / or harmed by their peers who are the same or similar age; everyone directly involved in peer on peer abuse is under the age of 18. 'Peer-on-peer' abuse can relate to various forms of abuse (not just sexual abuse and exploitation), and crucially it does not capture the fact that the behaviour in question is harmful to the child perpetrator as well as the victim. Research suggests that girls and young women are more at risk of abusive behaviours perpetrated by their peers; however it can also affect boys and young men, those with learning difficulties or

disabilities, LGBT Children and young people (CYP) and those who are from different communities. Situations where young people are forced or coerced into sexual activity by peers or associates can be related with gang / serious youth violence activity but that is not always the case. Peer influence or peer pressure is a major factor in the decisions made by young people to join groups. Many young people see it as a “way out” from their day to day life and feel a strong bond with their peers, one which they may be lacking at home.

(Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, updated July 2024)

Key Contacts:

Sheffield LADO (Hannah Appleyard) Tel: [0114 2734850](tel:01142734850)

Sheffield Safeguarding Children Advisory Service Tel: [0114 2053535](tel:01142053535)

Child Protection Enquiry Team Tel: 0114 [273 4925](tel:01142734925) (out of office via Healthcall) Tel: 0114 [242 7305](tel:01142427305)

Sheffield Safeguarding Children Board Tel: [0114 2734450](tel:01142734450)

Social Services Child Protection co-ordinators: Tel: 0114 [273 4934](tel:01142734934)

Police – Hammerton Road Tel: [0114 2202020](tel:01142202020)

Police (General Number) Tel: 101