



Safeguarding Policy & Procedures

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy (2026–2029)

Approved by: Board of Directors

Date of approval: 2/1/2026

Review date: September 2026 (or sooner if guidance changes)

1. Policy Statement

Lions Sports Academy (“Lions”) is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people who participate in its activities. We recognise our responsibility to protect children from harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation and to provide a safe, positive and inclusive environment in which all children can thrive.

Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility. All staff, coaches, volunteers, contractors and partners working on behalf of Lions have a duty to act in the best interests of children, to understand safeguarding procedures, and to take prompt action where concerns arise.

This policy applies to **all Lions activity**, including but not limited to:

- School-based coaching and curriculum delivery
- Day camps and holiday provision
- Residential camps and tours
- Events, competitions and fixtures
- Transport to and from activities
- Online and digital communication with children

Lions adopts a **child-centred approach**, ensuring that the welfare of the child is always paramount.

2. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to:

- All children and young people under the age of 18
- All adults working for or on behalf of Lions, including:
 - Employees
 - Freelance coaches and specialists
 - Volunteers and apprentices
 - Contractors and visiting professionals

This policy should be read alongside Lions’:

- Code of Conduct
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Online Safety & Communications Policy
- Residential Safeguarding Procedures (Appendix)

3. Legal Framework and Guidance

This policy is informed by and complies with the following legislation and statutory guidance (as updated):

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (current edition, including Annexes A & B)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004
- Education Act 2002 (where applicable to school delivery)
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Prevent Duty)
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- Relevant National Governing Body safeguarding guidance (including rugby delivery)

Lions also works in line with **local safeguarding partnership arrangements** in the areas in which it operates.

4. Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Andy Jones – Founder

The DSL has overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection across Lions. This includes:

- Managing safeguarding concerns and referrals
- Acting as the main point of contact with local authority children’s services, the police and the LADO
- Ensuring safeguarding procedures are implemented consistently
- Maintaining oversight of safeguarding records
- Ensuring appropriate training is completed

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead / Operations Lead

Stuart Divers – Chief Operating Officer (COO)

The Deputy DSL:

- Supports the DSL in all safeguarding matters
- Acts in the DSL's absence
- Oversees safeguarding arrangements operationally, including residentials, staffing and risk management

Safeguarding Leads on Site / Residentials

For all camps and residentials, a **named safeguarding lead** will be identified in advance and communicated to staff and participants. This individual will:

- Be responsible for day-to-day safeguarding oversight on site
- Escalate concerns immediately to the DSL or Deputy DSL

All Staff, Coaches and Volunteers

All adults working for or on behalf of Lions must:

- Read and understand this policy
- Complete required safeguarding training
- Act in accordance with the Lions Code of Conduct
- Report any safeguarding concern immediately

The LSA Lead Safeguarding Officer can be contacted by emailing safeguarding@lionssports.academy or ringing 020 3424 5070.

5. Types of Abuse and Safeguarding Concerns

Safeguarding concerns may include (but are not limited to):

- **Physical abuse**

- **Emotional abuse**
- **Sexual abuse**
- **Neglect**
- **Child-on-child abuse**, including bullying, sexual harassment or violence
- **Online abuse** and exploitation
- **Radicalisation or extremism**
- **Abuse linked to faith, culture or belief**
- **Exploitation**, including criminal or sexual exploitation

Staff do not need to identify the category of abuse. Any concern about a child's welfare must be reported.

6. Responding to a Safeguarding Concern

Immediate Risk

If a child is in immediate danger:

- Call **999**
- Inform the DSL or Deputy DSL as soon as possible

General Safeguarding Concerns

If you are worried about a child:

1. **Do not promise confidentiality**
2. **Listen calmly and take the concern seriously**
3. **Do not investigate** or ask leading questions
4. **Record the concern** as soon as possible using Lions' safeguarding concern form
5. **Report immediately** to the DSL or Deputy DSL

All concerns must be recorded, even if no further action is taken.

7. Recording and Information Sharing

- All safeguarding records are stored securely and confidentially
- Records are factual, dated and signed
- Information is shared on a **need-to-know basis** only
- Lions follows statutory guidance on information sharing

Safeguarding records are retained in line with legal requirements.

8. Allegations Against Staff and Low-Level Concerns

Lions takes all concerns about adults working with children seriously.

Allegations

An allegation may relate to an adult who has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against a child
- Behaved in a way that indicates they may pose a risk to children

All allegations must be reported **immediately** to the DSL or Deputy DSL and will be referred to the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** as appropriate.

Low-Level Concerns

Low-level concerns (behaviour that is inappropriate but does not meet the threshold for an allegation) must still be reported and recorded. Patterns of behaviour will be monitored and addressed through supervision and training.

9. Whistleblowing

Staff who have concerns about safeguarding practice or the behaviour of colleagues should raise these concerns without fear of reprisal. Concerns may be

raised:

- Internally with the DSL or Deputy DSL
- Externally with the local authority or relevant professional body

10. Safer Recruitment and Suitability

Lions is committed to safer recruitment practices, including:

- Appropriate DBS checks by role
- Identity and right-to-work checks
- References
- Safeguarding training prior to unsupervised work

No adult may have unsupervised access to children until all required checks are completed.

11. Code of Conduct and Professional Boundaries

All adults working with children must:

- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries
- Use physical contact only where appropriate and necessary
- Avoid 1:1 situations where possible and ensure transparency
- Communicate with children only via approved channels
- Never engage in humiliating, degrading or discriminatory behaviour

Best Safeguarding Practice, Poor Practice and Abuse

Lions Sports Academy (LSA) is committed to providing children and young people with a safe, positive and enjoyable experience in all activities, coaching sessions, camps and residential. Safeguarding is integral to all aspects of delivery and underpins every decision made on behalf of participants.

LSA recognises that it is not always easy to distinguish between **poor practice** and **abuse**. Poor practice is defined as any behaviour that contravenes the LSA Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy, Code of Conduct or related procedures. While poor practice may not meet the threshold of abuse, it can place children at risk and will be addressed promptly and appropriately.

All LSA staff, coaches, volunteers and contractors are expected to **consistently demonstrate best safeguarding practice** and uphold the highest professional standards at all times.

Best safeguarding practice includes:

- Providing a **fun, safe and inclusive environment** that promotes enjoyment, fairness and respect for the rules and values of the sport or activity
- Creating a **positive culture** that supports participation, confidence and opportunity for all young people
- Challenging and addressing **inappropriate behaviour**, including bullying or discriminatory conduct, in a timely and proportionate manner
- Respecting the **developmental age, needs and wellbeing** of each child, and prioritising welfare over a “win at all costs” approach
- Delivering activities and coaching in an **open and observable environment**, avoiding one-to-one situations in unobserved or isolated areas wherever possible
- Building relationships based on **mutual trust and respect**, encouraging young people to take appropriate responsibility for their own development
- Being aware of and responding appropriately to **medical conditions**, allergies, existing injuries and medication requirements
- Recording all injuries or accidents accurately and promptly, including any treatment given, using the LSA Incident Reporting system
- Maintaining **professional and appropriate boundaries** at all times between adults and children
- Acting as a **positive role model** and ambassador for LSA, the sport and the wider community
- Ensuring that any **allegations, disclosures, suspicions or concerns** relating to poor practice or abuse are treated seriously and reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL in accordance with this policy

Failure to adhere to best safeguarding practice may result in action being taken

in line with LSA disciplinary and safeguarding procedures.

12. Online Safety

Lions recognises the importance of online safety and ensures:

- Clear rules on digital communication
- Appropriate use of images and video
- Immediate reporting of online safeguarding concerns

13. Prevent Duty

Lions is committed to safeguarding children from radicalisation and extremism. Staff are trained to identify concerns and follow appropriate referral pathways.

14. Training, Monitoring and Review

- Safeguarding training is mandatory and refreshed regularly
- Safeguarding practice is monitored and reviewed
- This policy is reviewed annually or in response to changes in legislation or guidance

Signed: _____

Name: Andy Jones

Role: Founder / Designated Safeguarding Lead

Date: _____

I confirm I have read and will abide by Lions Sports Academy's Safeguarding Policy & Procedures.

Employee Coach Signature:

Print Name Employee/Coach:

Date:

