



# **SQUASH WALES**

## **Club Welfare Officer**

## **Safeguarding Toolkit**



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## Welcome to the Squash Wales Safeguarding Toolkit

You may be considering volunteering for the role as your club welfare officer or you may already have been appointed – if so, congratulations!

The club welfare officer is a crucial role in your club and you find that you will work across the membership (adults and children/young people), the club committee and the parents/guardians of the young people in your club. Squash Wales wish you a fulfilling and enjoyable experience and appreciate your commitment and time that you are giving to your club to support and develop the club and squash.

### 1. Introduction

The Safeguarding Toolkit is designed to support you in your role as the Club Welfare Officer. It complements the *Squash Wales Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy and Procedures*, which can be found on the Squash Wales website [www.squashwales.com](http://www.squashwales.com)

Squash Wales is committed to promoting a best practice approach to all aspects of squash in Wales, in particular promoting and creating a positive environment for all children/young people to enjoy and participate in squash.

As the Club Welfare Officer, Squash Wales will support you to promote a 'child centred' approach within the club. It is essential that the club considers how it supports and promotes the best interests of the children/young people in the club.



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## 2. Squash Wales Values

Everyone involved in Squash Wales is expected to support and promote the values identified below.

	• <b>Professionalism</b> - setting high standards for myself (skill, judgement, polite behaviour)
	• <b>Excellence</b> - being the best I can be
	• <b>Respect</b> - treating individuals with dignity and consideration
	• <b>Fairness</b> - treating people justly and equitably both on and off the court
	• <b>Enjoyment</b> - playing for pleasure, my own and others
	• <b>Courage</b> - taking accountability for results, being honest about mistakes, taking considered risks
	• <b>Trust</b> - keep my promises and commitments

## 3. Summary of Squash Wales Safeguarding Principles

- A child/young person is defined as someone under the age of 18.
- The 'welfare of the child is paramount' (looking after the best interests of the child and considering their perspective as a priority).
- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.
- All incidents of poor practice and allegations will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

***Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility***

## 4. Club Welfare Officer - characteristics

As the Club Welfare Officer, you may have been selected as you possess the following characteristics; friendly, approachable, calm, organised, patient, easy to talk to, good listener, non-judgemental, positive, confident and be seen as fair (among other things).

### What does the club welfare officer do in the club?

- Work with other members of the club to ensure a positive child centred environment.
- Assist the club to fulfil its responsibilities to safeguard children.
- Assist the club to implement the club and Squash Wales Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy and Guidance (in particular the reporting and recording procedures).
- Role model and promote best safeguarding practice within the club.
- Act as the first point of contact for members, officials, volunteers, parents and children if concerns about children's welfare, poor practice or abuse are identified.
- Act as the first point of contact with Squash Wales Lead Safeguarding Officer.
- Ensure appropriate confidentiality is maintained.
- Maintain contact details for the local statutory agencies and support services.
- Sit on the club's management committee to advise on generic safeguarding practices and support the committee to engage in a child centred approach to relevant decisions.

You have a key role to play in the club, however it is important to remember that implementing safeguarding across the club is NOT solely your responsibility, but you are influential in advocating and role modelling best safeguarding practice.

***Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility***

### ***CWO some suggested actions:***

- I. Why not ask the children in your club for feedback on 'the club'?

- II. What do they like/dislike about 'the club'?
- III. Suggestions for how 'the club' could be improved.

## 5. Safeguarding Best Practice

The following information is a summary from the *Squash Wales Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy and Procedures*.

Promoting the welfare of all young people in squash is a key part of the safeguarding role that we all have a responsibility to put into practice. A Coach, instructor, teacher, official or volunteer may have regular contact with young people and be an important link in identifying cases where a young person needs protection. All cases of poor practice should be reported to Squash Wales.

All personnel in squash should demonstrate exemplary behaviour, in order to protect themselves from false allegations or a misinterpretation of their intention.

- Always work in an open environment.
- Treat all young people with respect and dignity.
- Always prioritise the welfare of each young person.
- As an adult in a position of trust, maintain a safe and appropriate distance with performers.
- Build balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children to share in the decision-making process.
- Make squash fun and promote fair play.
- Encourage parents and young people to ask questions.
- Involve parents wherever possible.
- Ensure that if mixed teams are taken away, they are accompanied by a male and female member of staff.
- Adults should not enter children's bedrooms or invite children into their rooms (unless it is an emergency).

Other areas where the Club Welfare Officer may prompt coaches and instructors to consider the young people in their care:

- ✓ Training programmes – ensuring these are designed for the age and ability of the participants
- ✓ Injuries – does the young person have an injury? Have they fully recovered from the injury before they return to playing
- ✓ Disabilities – have any been disclosed? Does the young person have any behavioural difficulties? What information can be provided to support the young person's development in squash



## Examples of best safeguarding practice

Examples of best practice	Action
Listen to the child	Empower, consult, sensitively, Seek feedback, contribute to decision making. Treat everyone equally and fairly.
Partnership with Parents	Sharing information providing support and advice. Involve parents in supervision of children. Consent issues and checks
Working with other professionals	Acknowledge diverse roles – sports science, injury / treatment, sponsors, officials.
Ongoing training and development	Update skills, qualifications. Observe NGB policies and guidelines. First Aid, Health and Safety, Emergency situations, Insurance. Data Protection Act, Guidelines on use of photography
Excellent role model	Appearance Conduct Ethics. Clear boundaries Constructive feedback. Consistent implementation of Codes of Conduct.
Professional approach	Age appropriate activities. Work in open environment. Use of physical contact (HGB guidelines). Recognise burnout NGB: Recruitment Policy, Appraisal Mentor System, Encourage feedback
Planning and preparation	Complete appropriate paperwork. Keep accurate written records. Plan for adequate staffing levels for away events and tournaments. Plan for safe transportation. Assess risk – facilities, equipment, supervision.

**Codes of Conduct** – should always be implemented consistently and fairly. Their aim is to set a clear standard of behaviour, which should be followed by everyone. It is vitally important that the Coach role model's exemplary behaviour and standards when working with junior players. It is essential for children to know where their boundaries sit as club members and what sanctions are in place should there be a breach of the Code of Conduct.

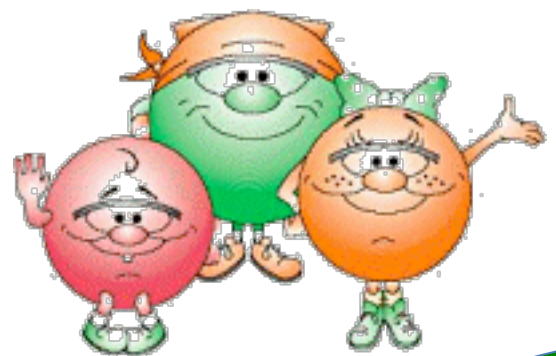
## 6. Code of Conduct for Children by Children

- Be happy – play with a smile on your face
- Be a good sportsman and respect others
- Never give in
- Do not hit yourself with the racket
- Stay safe in sport
- Make sure your coaches treat you at your own level
- Don't argue with the referee
- Always wear your goggles
- Don't throw or bang your racket
- Don't kick the glass
- Don't hurt your opponent
- Don't swear
- Ask for a let if there's a danger
- If you're not playing do not run on court
- Ask permission to go outside or to the toilets
- Do not cry after the match
- Do not shout at yourself
- Play every point like it's the last



**Thanks to children  
from**

**U11 Fun Series**



[www.squashwales.com](http://www.squashwales.com)

## 7. Poor Practice and Abuse

It is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. The staff and volunteers in squash are not experts at such recognition. However, they do have a responsibility to act if they have any concerns about the behaviour of someone (an adult or another child) towards a young person.

Poor practice includes any behaviour that contravenes the Squash Wales Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct.

Practice to be avoided:

- Rough – physical or sexually provocative games (horseplay).
- Sharing a room with a child.
- Spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others.
- Inappropriate touching.
- Reducing a child to tears – as a form of control.
- Allowing children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Making sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
- Taking children to your home, where they will be alone with you.
- Allowing allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- Doing things of a personal nature that they can do for themselves.

However, if you or someone in the club:

- Accidentally hurt a player
- The young person seems distressed in any manner
- A player appears to be sexually aroused by your actions
- A player misunderstands or misinterprets something you have said or done

It must be immediately:

1. Reported to a colleague (preferably the Club Welfare Officer)
2. Detailed written notes made
3. Inform parents
4. (Consider if this should also be reported to Squash Wales Lead Safeguarding Officer)

## Possible Signs and Indicators of Abuse

It is **possible** that a child/young person is being abused if the following signs and indicators are present:

- Have a change in behaviour (e.g. normally quiet become loud and/or disruptive in the session or a confident child becomes anxious or introverted)
- Become unreasonable, argumentative or aggressive
- Develop a stammer
- Reticent to go home or seem afraid of parents/guardian/siblings
- Have cuts or bruises they cannot explain
- Sexually inappropriate language or behaviour for their age

Any single signs or indicators may not be a sign of abuse, however this should still be reported/recorded as a concern by the Club Welfare Officer. A cluster of signs and indicators (rather than just one) may mean the child is being abused and should be reported to the Club Welfare Officer, Squash Wales Lead Safeguarding Officer and/or a statutory agency (social services/police).

## **8. Dealing with Disclosures and Allegations**

If a child makes a disclosure or an allegation about another child or adult inside or outside the club, it is essential that you:

### **LISTEN TO THE CHILD - CAREFULLY**

- React calmly – reassure the child
- Take the child seriously
- Record details/nature of the allegation – write a description of injuries/bruising
- Record your observations – child's behaviour/emotions
- Keep questions to minimum
- Any witnesses?
- Complete an Incident Report Form - Note times, location, date
- Note what is fact, opinion or hearsay

### **MAINTAIN CONFIDENTIALITY**

- Note any actions taken
- Inform Squash Wales Lead Safeguarding Officer
- When referring to statutory agencies, record names of Social Services staff/police involved
- Keep a copy of the information provided (securely).

***It is not the responsibility of the Club Welfare Officer or any other member of the club to decide whether or not a child/young person is being abused.***

***Your responsibility is to pass on your concerns to Squash Wales Lead Safeguarding Officer/social services/police.***

Be aware that child abuse generates media attention, any inquiry or request for a comment related to a current or historical case of child abuse should be referred to Squash Wales.

## 9. Reporting Concerns

### Notes for using the Incident Report Form

The Incident Report Form is completed by the 'Club Welfare' officer within a squash club or organisation, as when and if incidents occur.

The Form identifies the essential information that needs to be recorded if an incident occurs (i.e. there is a disclosure from a young player, or an allegation is made) and should be kept by the Club Welfare Officer.

On receiving an allegation or disclosure, the Club Welfare Officer will complete the form with the key witnesses involved.

If social services or the police are involved, then a copy of the form should be sent to the case officer at social services, following a telephone report. Please also contact Squash Wales Lead Safeguarding Officer, David Evans at the Squash Wales Office [david.evans@squashwales.com](mailto:david.evans@squashwales.com) and ensure a copy of the form is forwarded. Squash Wales will hold definitive records in a safe and secure place. This will enable Squash Wales to monitor incidents and develop best practice in their handling.

### Other useful contacts:

NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000

ChildLine: 0800 1111

## SQUASH WALES INCIDENT REPORT FROM

Name of person making referral:	
Status of person:	Date of referral:
Contact details of person making referral:	
Brief outline of reason for referral, giving date and time of incident:	

### Section A: Please complete if referral is specifically related to a child/children

First Childs Name:	Second Childs Name:
Date of Birth:	Date of Birth:
First Childs Address:	Second Childs Address:
Parent / Carers Name and Address for First Child:	Parent / Carers Name & Address for Second Child:
Record exactly what child / person referring said. Continue on a separate sheet if necessary.	
Actions taken:	

<b>Section B: Please complete if referral is specifically related to a parent / staff member / volunteer in Squash</b>	
Persons Name	Age
Address	
Parents address if above named person is under 18.	
Club / County / National details:	
Record nature of referral. Continue on separate sheet if necessary.	

**This form should be returned direct to: - The Lead Safeguarding Officer, Squash  
Wales, Sports Wales National Centre, Sophia Gardens, Cardiff, CF11 9SW**

## **10. Taking and using photographic and recorded images of young people**

**(NB - this guidance applies to any device capable of recording images)**

Recording of positive images of young people participating and enjoying squash is a great asset for all clubs, the images should be a celebration of achievement and performance.

Squash Wales are committed to ensuring that all necessary steps are taken to protect young people from inappropriate use of their images in resources, media publications and the internet including social media.

The following is our guidance to support best safeguarding practice:

1. All photography equipment should have the audible 'click' sound turned on.
2. All photographs and images should reflect a positive impression of squash and the players involved, the images should be taken in a way that reduces the opportunities for their misinterpretation or abuse.
3. Anyone wishing to take photographs or record images of young people playing squash in a club, at an event or competition should register the equipment they intend using.
4. Everyone that registers to record images in a club, at an event or competition should be asked how their photographs or images will be used e.g. personal (including social media), websites, club promotion, etc.

### **The following should NOT be permitted**

- Unsupervised access to any young person or one to one photo sessions.
- Unsupervised photo sessions outside of the club, event or competition.
- Photography in the changing rooms.

Any person that does not adhere to the guidelines will be asked to comply. Those failing to comply will have their registration to take photographs and record images revoked at the club, for the duration of the Event or competition and could result in further disciplinary action by Squash Wales.



## 11. Best Practice Guidance for the use of Social Networking by Coaches and others in a position of trust

### Use of Social Media, Emailing or Texting

The following is meant as useful guidance to support coaches and those in a position of trust and responsibility, who wish to use communication tools such as text messages, emails and social media sites in good faith.

The information is intended to minimise the risk of individuals being exposed to inappropriate behaviour or allegations.

- Remember to act professionally with responsible and respectful communication, whether via email, website or mobile phone
- Be mindful. It is inappropriate for adult coaches to communicate on a 1-2-1 basis with players under the age of 18
- If using the above communication methods, you should copy to a third party.
- It is advisable to send group messages rather than single messages
- Ensure that messages only refer to specific club related matters.
- As an individual in a position of trust, you should not have any players under the age of 18 as friends on social networking sites. Encourage players to follow the organisation page
- Remember your position as a role model
- Be wary that if you become their friend (on social media) you will be able to see details of their private life. It could place you in a vulnerable position
- If a child/young person in your club requests to become your friend, you should decline if any of the following apply: -
  - You are in a position of responsibility in respect of that child/young person
  - You hold a position of trust and responsibility in the club
  - Your contact with the child/young person is through the club and the parent/guardian does not give their consent to such contact
- Before you post anything online, consider what you are about to post and who will be able to view it
- The publishing of photographs or videos is subject to the Governing Body media guidelines (refer to Code of Conduct)
- Ensure you set the appropriate privacy settings on your social networking account
- Do not post or discuss comments or opinions about other coaches, volunteers, staff, players, clubs, parents or officials. To do so would breach Squash Wales Code of Conduct



## 1. Notes

If a player is under 16, parental consent is required for communication between adult and young person.

If a player is under 18, parents should be informed and be made aware of the communication between the adult and young person.

## 2. Reporting Concerns

If a player discloses a message, email or image that is inappropriate for a child to have, you must inform a designated Safeguarding Officer or Club Welfare Officer.

If a child or young person is concerned or feels uncomfortable with anything encountered online, they should be advised to speak to their parent/guardian or adult that they trust.

Reports about suspicious behaviour towards children and young people in an online environment should be made to the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre at [www.ceop.uk](http://www.ceop.uk).

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# 12. Summary

This Safeguarding Toolkit aims to provide Club Welfare Officers with some additional guidance for their role. It is important to remember that should an issue or concern arise in the club there are a number of sources of support:

- Squash Wales Lead Safeguarding Officer – David Evans is able to provide advice and guidance as well as accepting referrals for club related concerns (e-mail: [david.evans@squashwales.com](mailto:david.evans@squashwales.com) )
- Concerns that relate to the Squash Wales Lead Safeguarding Officer or any general complaints should be directed to the Squash Wales Chairman (email: [richard.bennett@squashwales.com](mailto:richard.bennett@squashwales.com))
- NSPCC helpline – available 24 hours per day for advice and guidance on safeguarding or child abuse concerns.
- Social Services – have an on-call social worker 24 hours per day for referrals and advice. Please remember this is a very busy service so out of office hours a message will be taken and the duty social worker will return your call.
- Police – able to provide advice and accept referrals for child abuse concerns.

All the above services encourage you to make contact if you have any concerns about a

child or young person whether they are a member of your club or not