

Responding to, Recording and Reporting Concerns Which Might Arise Within or Outside the Club

Across cricket, at all levels, there is a requirement to have clear and unambiguous procedures in place in respect of child protection, which provide step by step guidance on what action to take if there are concerns about a child's safety or welfare.

This section of the Kit Bag outlines this step by step guidance. The following structures and procedures are ECB requirements, and **MUST** be followed, as written, by all clubs affiliated to the ECB.

There are legal obligations for organisations known as 'Regulated Activity Providers' (RAPs) who directly employ, or deploy, paid staff or volunteers to work with children. The ECB is a RAP, as are County Boards, leagues and clubs, if they appoint people to roles that undertake Regulated Activity. This means they must comply with the law in this area. These RAPs, as employers, are legally required to refer to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA), anyone they remove from Regulated Activity, where they have harmed or pose a risk of harm to a child, for example, as a result of an allegation being investigated. The ECB will carry out this referral on behalf of member clubs/leagues if the matter is referred to them, so clubs, leagues and Boards must use the ECB reporting mechanisms for all incidents and allegations. Further details on how to determine if a role being undertaken is considered to be a Regulated Activity or not can be found in the 'ECB Guidance on Roles in Cricket that require a Vetting Check', and 'How to determine which roles in Cricket are Regulated Activity', contained in this Kit Bag.

Introduction

The protection and support of children in cricket is of paramount importance to the ECB. The ECB has therefore developed a system which allows individuals to respond, record and report any concerns or issues they may have, relating to a child at their club or under their care.

To ensure appropriate action is taken when there is suspected abuse, bullying or poor practice, the ECB:

- Has appointed and trained a National Safeguarding Manager and Lead Child Safeguarding Adviser.
- Has developed specific regulations and protocols relating to managing child safeguarding referrals
- Has appointed a group of individuals who will be responsible for the management of any disclosure or referrals received – the Referral Management Group (RMG)
- Requires all County Boards, affiliated clubs and leagues to recruit, appoint and train a Welfare Officer, who will receive training through the ECB education and training strategy
- Requires all clubs to take appropriate action where any suspected abuse, bullying or poor practice comes to light, in accordance with procedures defined and published by the ECB

Reasons for taking appropriate action to report concerns

There may be a number of reasons an individual finds it necessary to report a concern. These include:

- In response to something a child has said
- In response to something you or someone else has seen
- In response to signs or suspicions of abuse
- In response to allegations made against a member of staff or volunteer *BE AWARE - allegations are often made as 'complaints'. If you hear a complaint which raises concerns about a child or children, treat it initially as an allegation.

- In response to allegations made about a parent, carer or someone not working within the sport
- In response to bullying
- In response to a breach of code of conduct/poor practice
- Observation of inappropriate behaviour

This is not a definitive list.

There are three steps involved in taking appropriate action. These are known as the three R's. Each is essential.

- **R**esponding to the disclosure/suspicion and/or allegation
- **R**ecording the relevant information
- **R**eporting the relevant information

Each of these steps is covered in more detail below:

Throughout the entire process confidentiality is critical

The legal principle that the 'welfare of the child is paramount' means that considerations, which might apply to other situations within the organisation, should not be allowed to over-ride the right of children to be protected from harm.

Every effort must be made to ensure confidentiality is maintained when an allegation has been made and is being investigated.

The procedures require that only those that need to know are told. This means only those individuals stated within the reporting structure and no-one else, unless directed by statutory agencies or the ECB Safeguarding Team.

Step 1 Responding to disclosure, suspicions and/or allegations

Anyone responding to disclosure, suspicions and/or allegations must always:

- Stay calm; do not show disgust or disbelief
- Ensure the child is safe and feels safe
- Listen carefully to what is said
- Ask questions only where they are really necessary to clarify what you are being told. (Always avoid asking leading questions)
- Keep an open mind – do not make assumptions or judgments, show disgust or disbelief
- Take the concern seriously

Never:

- *Approach any alleged abuser to discuss the concern*
- *Rush into actions that may be inappropriate*
- *Make promises you cannot keep*

- Reassure the child and stress that they are not to blame
- Be honest and explain you will have to tell someone else to help with the situation. (Do not agree to keep secrets between you and the child)
- Maintain confidentiality – only tell others if it will help protect the child

Always consult someone else (the person in charge or the designated officer) so you can begin to protect the child and gain support for yourself

Step 2 Recording the incident

Information passed to the ECB, children's social care, police and/or the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) must be as helpful as possible, which is why it is important to make a detailed record at the time of the disclosure/concern. The ECB Incident Reporting Form (which can be found in this Kit Bag) should be used wherever possible.

Information recorded must include the following:

- Details of the child including full name, age/date of birth, address and gender
- Details of the parent or guardian and whether they have been informed or not

- Details of the facts of the allegation or observations
- Details of the person alleged to have caused the incident/injury including the name, address and date of birth or their approximate age
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries
- The child's account, if it can be given, of what happened and how
- Witnesses to the incident(s)
- Any times, dates or other relevant information
- A clear distinction between what is (known to be) fact, opinion or hearsay
- A signature, date and time on the report

Step 3 Reporting

Please remember this key point when reading this section:

It is everyone's duty to report suspected cases of abuse or concern to protect children. It is for the professionals to decide if abuse or neglect has taken place.

The ECB reporting structure

The principle strand of the "Safe Hands" safeguarding policy is the provision of an appropriate mechanism to provide correct, and comprehensive, reporting procedures for concerns. The ECB has a reporting framework which operates on three levels.

- The primary level involves a Welfare Officer at local level such as in a club or league.
- The role of the Club Welfare Officer (Club WO) is explained elsewhere in this Kit Bag
- Supporting the Club Welfare Officer is a County Welfare Officer (County WO) who is appointed by, and accountable to, the County Cricket Board. There is a County Welfare Officer for each of the ECB's County Cricket Boards.

The County Welfare Officer:

- Is responsible for all safeguarding matters within their County
- Provides support, guidance and advice directly to County Welfare Officers
- Is the first point of contact for all safeguarding matters within their County
- Works closely with the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) to ensure all procedures and policies are up to date and appropriate for safeguarding children in sport
- Acts as a source of advice and support to Club and League Welfare Officers and all other affiliated members of that County including the County Cricket Board Management Committee
- Is responsible for the ECB Vetting process
- Is directly responsible to, and is supported by, the ECB Safeguarding Team and often delivers, or directs, programmes on behalf of the ECB
- Is responsible for investigating incidents and concerns
- Will ensure all appropriate initial action has been completed if an incident arises and an appropriate investigation is undertaken, if necessary

The County Board is responsible for monitoring safeguarding within their cricket community and usually requires the County Welfare Officer to monitor clubs and training provision on their behalf.

- Supporting the County Welfare Officer is the ECB Safeguarding Team, part of the Ethics and Compliance Department. The Safeguarding Team:
- Advises on and assists liaison with, or referral to, the statutory agencies, i.e. police, children's social care, LADO or ISA, and so on
- Advises on any support needed for the child
- Is able to deal with clubs who have failed to comply with procedures appropriately

ECB reporting structure within cricket



ECB reporting procedures

The matter which needs to be reported may:

- a) be related to an incident within cricket
- b) be related to an incident outside cricket or
- c) be related to an incident which has occurred in connection with a club school link

Each of these has its own reporting process, as outlined below.

Occasionally, in exceptional circumstances, a Club Welfare Officer may need to make a report directly to the police or children's social care department.

If at any time you are unsure who you should report concerns to, speak to your Club or County Welfare officer to find out!

Reporting to police or children's social care

Reporting the matter to the police, children's social care department or LADO should not be delayed by attempts to obtain more information.

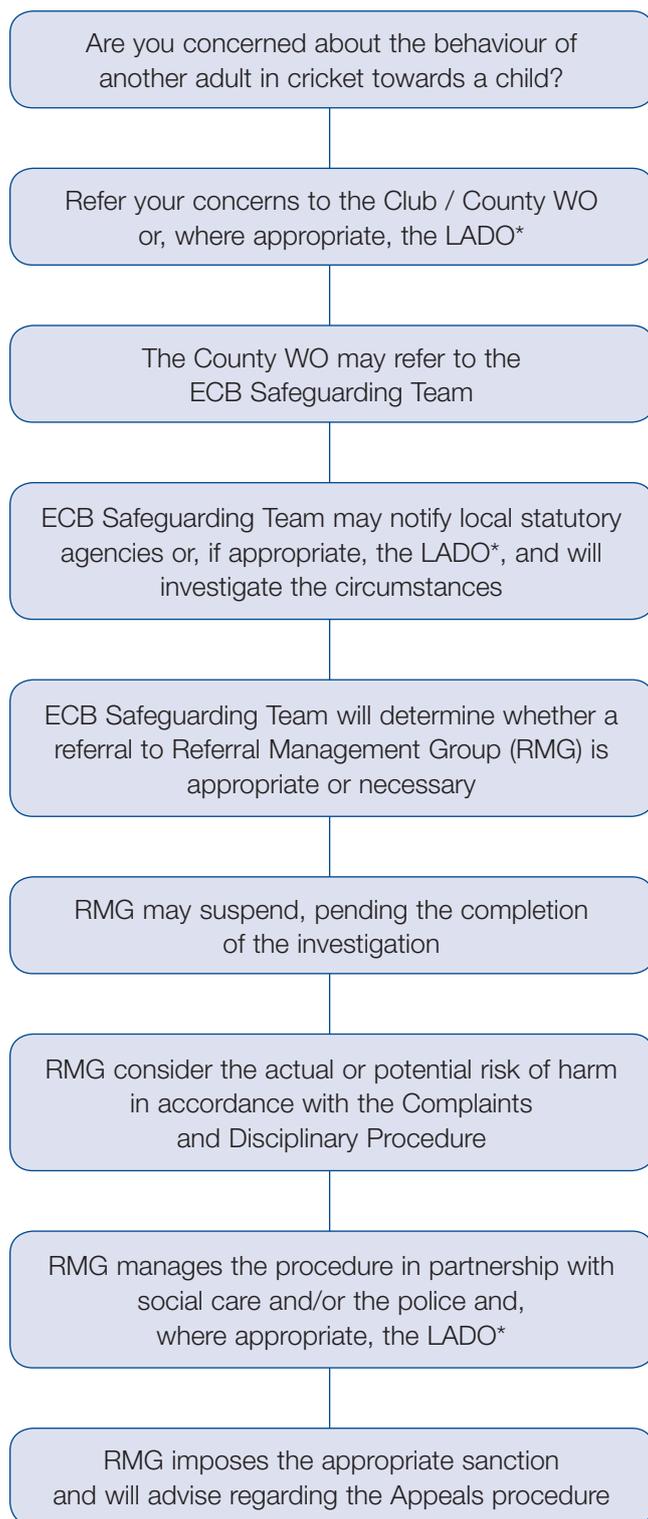
A record must be made of the name and job title of the children's social care, police or LADO member of staff to whom the concerns were passed, together with the time and date of the call, in case any follow-up is needed. Wherever possible, referrals telephoned to the children's social care department or LADO, must be confirmed in writing within 24-48 hours.

A copy of this information should be sent to the ECB Safeguarding Team.

a) If the referral relates to an incident within cricket:

The process for such referrals is as follows:

- Any person at, or connected with, a cricket club should report any concerns they have about the welfare of a child within cricket to their Club Welfare Officer (or in an emergency directly to the children's social care department, police or LADO)
- If a Club Welfare Officer has any concerns, or an incident or concern is reported to them, they must inform the County Welfare Officer, who may refer the matter to the ECB Safeguarding Team
- If the County Welfare Officer or ECB Safeguarding Team is not available, the Club Welfare Officer must avoid delay and seek advice from the local children's social care department, the police, the LADO, or the NSPCC. As soon as possible the Club Welfare Officer must then inform the ECB Safeguarding Team and explain the action taken to date
- The ECB Safeguarding Team will, where appropriate, notify the local statutory agencies or LADO, and investigate the incident if appropriate
- The ECB Safeguarding Team will notify the ECB RMG as required
- The RMG will deal with any media enquiries and decide on any action required to suspend the individual involved, if advised to do so by the children's social care, police or LADO
- A full investigation will be conducted under the ECB Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure on advice from children's social care and/or the police and/or LADO, pending the outcome of any social care or police investigation



*Referral to LADO appropriate where the individual works in England and has direct responsibility for children

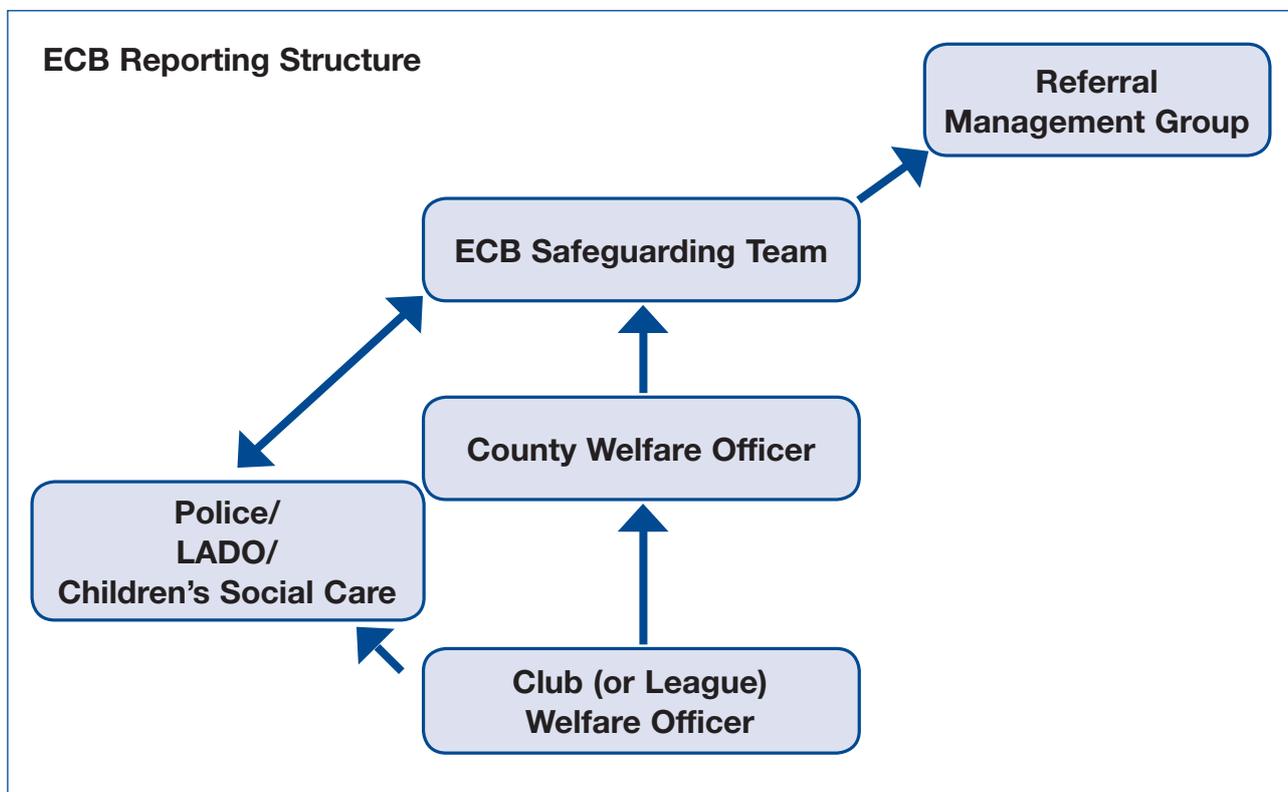
b) If the referral relates to an incident outside cricket:

Any person who has concerns relating to incidents of child abuse or poor parenting skills regarding a parent/carer outside cricket, should advise the Club Welfare Officer. The Club Welfare Officer must then inform the County Welfare Officer, and the County Welfare Officer will then inform the ECB Safeguarding Team.

The ECB Safeguarding Team or the County Welfare Officer will inform the appropriate statutory service i.e. police, children's social care or LADO.

A record will be kept of the referral and the Safeguarding Team will consider the incident/allegation and its impact or potential impact on cricket and if it is necessary for the RMG to take action to safeguard children, for example through suspension.

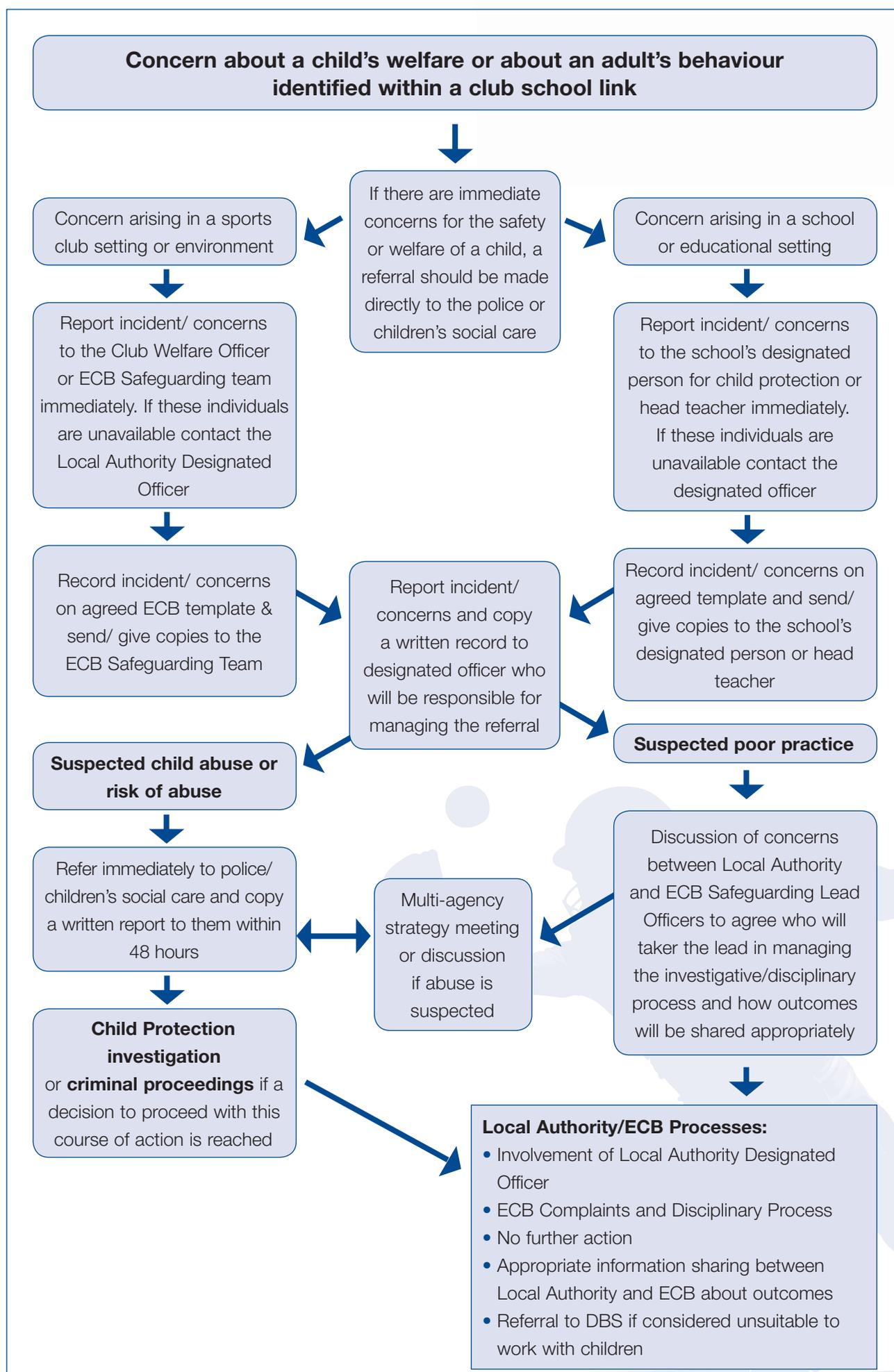
No further action will be taken under ECB procedures unless agreed with or requested by the statutory agencies or until the statutory agencies have completed their enquiries.



Incidents occurring in connection with a club school link

If a club is part of a club school link then a specific reporting structure must be followed for any concerns which arise for activities taking place under that programme.

Details of this reporting structure can be found in the diagrams below, and in such situations, these will over-ride the normal ECB reporting flowchart.



Flowchart for concerns about a child's welfare outside of cricket but involving a child within a club school link

