

MANAGING ALLEGATIONS OR CONCERNS ABOUT PEOPLE WHO WORK OR VOLUNTEER WITH CHILDREN/YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY

It is essential that any allegation of abuse made against a member of staff or volunteers associated with ESF Events are dealt with sensitively and promptly, regardless of where the alleged incident took place, and in a way that provides effective protection for the child/young person, and supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

The purpose and scope of this policy statement

This policy will be adopted in respect of allegations that might indicate that a person is unsuitable to continue to work with children/young people in their present position, or in any capacity.

All ESF Events staff and volunteers should understand what to do if they receive an allegation against another member of staff or they themselves have concerns about the behaviour of another member of staff. It is our policy that all allegations will be reported straight away, to the ESF Events Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Legal framework

We subscribe to the appropriate National Governing Body, who are underpinned by the Government guidance and sets out the framework for managing cases of allegations of abuse against people who work with children and young people.

This policy will be used in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a member of staff or volunteer has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child/young person, or may have harmed a child/young person.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
- Behaved towards a child/young person in a way that indicates they are unsuitable to work with children/young people. This will include cases of verbal abuse.

There may be up to 3 strands in the consideration of an allegation:

- A police investigation of a possible criminal offence.
- Enquiries and assessment by children's social care about whether a child is in need of protection or in need of services.
- Consideration by ESF Events of disciplinary action in respect of the individual.

Confidentiality

Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against publicity while an allegation is being investigated/considered.

Resignations and “Compromise Agreements”

The fact that a person tenders their resignation, or ceases to provide their services, will not prevent an allegation being followed up in accordance with these procedures. Every effort will be made to reach a conclusion in all cases of allegations, bearing in mind the safety or welfare of children, including any in which the person concerned refuses to cooperate with the process.

Where possible the person will be given a full opportunity to answer the allegation and make representations about it. The process of investigating the allegation, and reaching a judgement about whether it can be regarded as substantiated, will continue even if the person does not cooperate.

In any event, such an agreement will not prevent a thorough police investigation, where appropriate. Furthermore, it will not override the statutory duty to make a referral to the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS), for consideration of placing the person’s name on the Children’s Barred List.

Record Keeping

A clear and comprehensive summary of any allegations made, how the allegation was followed up and resolved, and any action taken and decisions reached, will be kept on a person’s confidential personnel file. A copy may be provided to the person concerned. The purpose of the record is to enable accurate information to be given in response to any future request for a reference if the person has moved on.

It will provide clarification in cases where a future DBS reveals information from the police about an allegation that did not result in a criminal conviction. In addition, it will help to prevent unnecessary re-investigation if an allegation re-surfaces after a period of time. The record will be retained at least until the person has reached normal retirement age, or for a period of 10 years from the date of the allegation, if that is longer.

Timescales

It is in everyone’s interest to resolve cases as quickly as possible, consistent with a fair and thorough investigation. Every effort will be made to manage cases to avoid any unnecessary delay.

Initial Considerations

The appropriate National Governing Body should be informed by the ESF Designated Safeguarding Lead, of all allegations of abuse against staff, even where the police are contacted directly.

The ESF Designated Safeguarding Lead will inform the accused person about the allegation as soon as possible after consulting with the appropriate National Governing Body.

Suspension

Suspension will be considered in any case where there is cause to suspect a child is at risk of significant harm, or the allegation warrants investigation by the police, or is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal. A person will not be suspended automatically, or without careful thought.

Action on Conclusion of a Case

If the allegation is substantiated and the person is dismissed, or ESF Events ceases to use the person's services, or the person resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services, the ESF Events Designated Safeguarding Lead will inform the appropriate National Governing Body safeguarding team.

Methods of reporting:

Safeguarding children is everybody's responsibility. All staff members have a responsibility to report a concern if they believe a member of staff has behaved inappropriately towards a child.

Any concerns about people who work or volunteer with children need to be reported to:

- ESF Events Safeguarding phone line on 07947 313302 (operational during festival dates only)
- ESF Safeguarding email: safeguarding@esfevents.co.uk
- The appropriate National Governing Body - The Football Association (FA), Scottish Youth Football Association (SYFA), England Netball, Rugby Football Union (RFU) or Rugby Football League (RFL).
- Alternatively, you can go direct to the Police or Children's Social Care and report concerns, or to the Child Protection in Sport Unit via cpsu@nspcc.org.uk or the NSPCC 24hr Helpline at **0808 800 5000** or by emailing help@NSPCC.org.uk