



# SAFEGUARDING GUIDELINES

## East Lancashire Table Tennis League - SAFEGUARDING GUIDELINES

These guidelines should be read in conjunction with Table Tennis England's (hereafter called TTE) Safeguarding and Vulnerable Adults Policy.

- For the purposes of these guidelines and TTE's procedures the term young person refers to anyone aged under 18 (The Children's Act 1989 and 2004).
- The definition of an 'adult at risk' is a person who is 18 years or over who has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and is experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect. As a result of care and support needs the person is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect. (Care Act 2014).
- The East Lancashire Table Tennis League (hereafter called the League) and TTE are fully aware of their responsibilities and the need to safeguard against individuals who may abuse their position within the sport. By implementing these guidelines The League recognises the rights and needs of both young and disabled people and others who may be particularly vulnerable.
- Coaches, officials and volunteers working within table tennis who have regular contact with the most vulnerable within the table tennis community have a key role to play in identifying and recognising when abuse may be occurring whether that be inside or outside of the sport and TTE will commit to providing training and updates to support them.

### **The League believes in and seeks to uphold the following principles:**

- The welfare of the child is paramount and also that of any vulnerable member of our society.
- All young and vulnerable people have the right to protection from abuse regardless of their age, culture, disability, gender, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity.
- All allegations will be taken seriously and any reports or concerns will be dealt with promptly and sensitively ensuring that all appropriate action is taken.
- The League's members and volunteers recognise they have the responsibility to ensure that they act upon any concerns or allegations.

- Processes for dealing with all complaints and allegations are fair and open to challenge through an appeals process.
- The League commits to support anyone who, in good faith, reports their concerns.

### **What is abuse?**

There are 5 recognised types of abuse recognised in the Children's Act (1989) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2006) identifies them as ***Neglect, Physical, Sexual, Emotional***. **Bullying** is also recognised as abuse. **Radicalisation** is also included.

### **Remember that:**

**It is not the responsibility of the League members, coaches, or volunteers to decide that abuse is taking place, but it is their responsibility to act on any concerns.**

If a child or young person says or indicates that they are being abused, or information is obtained which gives concern that they are being abused, the person receiving the information should listen carefully and -- **react calmly so as not to frighten the young person:**

- Tell the young person they are not to blame and that it was right to tell.
- Do not show distaste, disgust or anger.
- Do not ask direct questions - who, what, where, when.
- Do not put words into their mouth by suggesting what has happened and by whom.
- Do encourage them to talk.
- Take what they say seriously, recognising the difficulties inherent in interpreting what a child who has a speech disability and/or differences in languages says.
- Keep questions to an absolute minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said.
- Keep calm and, even if you find what they are saying difficult or painful, keep listening.
- Reassure them but do not make promises of confidentiality, which may not be feasible in the light of subsequent developments.
- Make a full record of what has been said, heard and/or seen as soon as possible including dates and times.

**Do not contact or confront the individual who is alleged to be responsible.**

### **Responding to abuse or allegations of abuse**

**It is not the responsibility of anyone involved with the League to take responsibility or decide whether or not child abuse is taking place.** However, there is a responsibility to protect children and vulnerable adults by informing TTE's Safeguarding Manager and the local club/league welfare officer. In an emergency where the child's welfare could be affected (this could occur if the suspicions relate to the parent/carer of the child) all suspicions should be referred immediately to the local Children's Social Care services or the Police in order that they can then make enquiries and take any necessary action to protect the child. As soon as realistically possible TTE's Safeguarding Manager should also be informed of any actions taken.

### **What to do if there are concerns:**

There is always a commitment to work in partnership with parents or carers where there are concerns about their children; therefore, in most situations it would be important to talk to parents or carers to help clarify any initial concerns. For example, if a young person seems withdrawn, they may have experienced bereavement in the family.

However, there are circumstances in which a young person might be placed at even greater risk if such concerns were shared (e.g. where a parent or carer may be responsible for the abuse or not able to respond to the situation appropriately). In these situations, or where concern still exists, any suspicion, allegation or incident of abuse must be reported to the local club/league welfare officer or TTE's Safeguarding Manager as soon as possible and be recorded.

If you are concerned about the welfare of a young person or suspect that a young person has been, is being, or is likely to be abused, inform the club/league welfare officer or TTE's Safeguarding Manager. It is the responsibility of the person informed to contact the local Children's Social Care services without delay. If this person is not available, or the concerns/allegations relate to this person, the person discovering or being informed of the abuse should immediately contact Children's Social Care or the police.

If you have serious concerns about the immediate safety of a young person contact the Police or Children's Social Care; record who you spoke to and tell TTE's Safeguarding Manager and/or your club/league welfare officer what you have done.

Children's Social Care, together with TTE's Safeguarding Officer, where appropriate, will advise about how and when parents and carers will be informed.

## **GUIDELINES FOR COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FOR LEAGUES AND CLUBS**

### **League and Club Complaints Procedure**

This section should be read in conjunction with the Code of Conduct

#### **Having a complaints process**

Writing and adopting clear Codes of Conducts and advertising the ethos of the League and your club is key to limiting the number of potential complaints. If everyone involved with table tennis, leagues and clubs know the expectation from them with regard to their conduct both on and off the table, in addition to their responsibility as an individual towards everyone involved with our sport, complaints can be dealt with simply and effectively. Initially it may be a case for just referring the individual to Codes of Conduct.

If the complaint cannot be dealt with in this way then the following processes could be implemented:

- If the complaint is to do with child protection then it should be submitted to the Club/ League Welfare Officer or directly to TTE's Safeguarding Manager where appropriate guidance will be given
- For all other complaints then they could be directed towards the League Organising Secretary or to the club's disciplinary procedure
- Once a complaint has been received and dealt with then there should also be a clear appeals process which could be with the club/league

The whole process should be formally written and adopted by the club/league and available

on the club/league's website, placed in any handbook and/or displayed on a noticeboard so that every member or visitor can see and access the information.

Clubs and leagues should also be aware that TTE has a formal disciplinary process which is included in TTE's Rules Book, a copy of which can be obtained by from the TTE website.

If you are not sure what to do advice can be obtained by telephoning

ELTTL: Welfare Officer  
Name: Catherine Lawson

Phone: 07505354318

Email: [catlaw@live.co.uk](mailto:catlaw@live.co.uk)

or

TTE: Safeguarding Officer/Manager:  
Name: Judy Rogers

Phone: 07977-243327 ,.

Email: [help@tabletennisengland.co.uk](mailto:help@tabletennisengland.co.uk)

or

The NSPCC (24 HOUR) FREEPHONE HELPLINE ON 0808 8005000,

Date:15th March 2020