Safeguarding & Child Protection Procedures *(Kent)*

Purpose and aim of the procedures –

These procedures apply to everyone working for or on behalf of Buzzers Academies Ltd who has contact with children and young people, including employed and self-employed sports coaches, tutors, agency staff, contractors, volunteers, administrators and office-based staff who may encounter children or their families. When services are delivered in a school or college, staff must also follow the safeguarding and child protection procedures of that setting.

Buzzers Academies staff working in schools and colleges must understand and follow the safeguarding arrangements of the setting in which they work. All staff must receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training, know the identity and availability of the relevant Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputy, and read the applicable version of Part one of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026. Buzzers Academies will maintain mechanisms to confirm that staff have read, understood and can discharge these responsibilities.

This policy is reviewed at least annually and whenever statutory guidance or local safeguarding arrangements change. It should be read alongside Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, Working Together to Safeguard Children, the relevant school or setting's child protection policy, Buzzers Academies' staff code of conduct, safer recruitment procedures, online safety arrangements, whistleblowing procedure and allegations or low-level concerns procedure. Where Buzzers Academies works within a school or college, staff must follow that setting's safeguarding procedures and report concerns to both the setting's Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Buzzers Academies Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay.

A description of the different categories of abuse –

Child abuse is any form of physical, emotional, or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm to a child or young person. It commonly occurs within a relationship of trust or responsibility and is an abuse of power or a breach of trust. Abuse can happen to a young person regardless of their age, gender, race, or ability. The most common types of abuse are physical, sexual, emotional, neglect, and bullying. The abuser may be a family member, someone the young person encounters in residential care or in the community, including sports and physical activities. Any individual may abuse or neglect a young person directly or may be responsible for abuse because they fail to prevent other people harming the young person. Abuse in all its forms can affect a young person at any age. The effects can be so damaging that if not treated, may follow the individual into adulthood. Young people with disabilities may be at increased risk of abuse through various factors such as stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, isolation, and powerlessness to protect themselves or adequately communicate that abuse has occurred or is occurring.

Physical abuse

Where adults physically hurt or injure a child/young person e.g. hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, biting, scalding, suffocating, and drowning. Giving children and young people alcohol or inappropriate drugs would also constitute child abuse. In a sport or performing arts situation, physical abuse may occur when the nature and intensity of training disregard the capacity of the child/young person's immature and growing body.

Sexual abuse
This occurs when adults (male and female) use young people to meet their own sexual needs. This could include full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse, and fondling. Showing young people pornography or talking to them in a sexually explicit manner are also forms of sexual abuse. In sport or the performing arts, activities which might involve physical contact with young people could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. Also, the power of the coach over young athletes, if misused, may lead to abusive situations.

Emotional abuse
The persistent emotional ill treatment of a child/young person, likely to cause severe and lasting adverse effects on the young person's emotional development. It may involve telling a child/young person they are useless, worthless, unloved, or inadequate. It may feature expectations of children/young people that are not appropriate to their age or development. It may cause a child/young person to be frightened or in danger by being constantly shouted at, threatened, or taunted which may make them frightened or withdrawn. In sport or the performing arts, this may occur when the child/young person is constantly criticised, given negative feedback, expected to perform at levels that are above their capability. Other forms of emotional abuse could take the form of name calling and bullying.

Neglect
This occurs when an adult fails to meet the child/young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, to an extent that is likely to result in serious impairment of the child/young person's health or development. Examples of this could be failing to provide adequate food, shelter, and clothing, failing to protect them from physical harm or danger, or failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. In sport or the performing arts, this could occur when a coach does not keep the young person safe or exposes them to undue cold/heat or unnecessary risk of injury.

Bullying
This may come from another child/young person or an adult. Bullying is defined as deliberate hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. There are four main types of bullying; physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, slapping), verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, name calling, graffiti, threats, abusive text messages and social media trolling), emotional (e.g. tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating, ignoring, isolating form the group), or sexual (e.g. unwanted physical contact or abusive comments). In sport or the performing arts, bullying may arise when a parent or coach pushes the child/young person too hard to succeed, or a rival athlete or official uses bullying behaviour.

How to recognise the signs of abuse –

Even for those experienced in working with child abuse, it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. Most people are not experts in such recognition, but indications that a young person is being abused may include one or more of the following:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruises, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries.
- An injury for which an explanation seems inconsistent.
- The young person describes what appears to be an abusive act involving them.
- Another young person or adult expresses concern about the welfare of a young person.
- Unexplained changes in a young person's behaviour e.g., becoming very upset, quiet, withdrawn, or displaying sudden outbursts of temper.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness or engaging in sexually explicit behaviour.
- Distrust of adults, particularly those for whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
- Difficulty in making friends.
- Being prevented from socialising with others.
- Displaying variations in eating patterns, including overeating or loss of appetite.
- Losing weight for no apparent reason.
- Becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt.
- Over-tiredness.
- Suicidal threats or behaviours.
- Displaying frequent unexplained minor injuries.

- Behavioral changes such as reduced concentration and/or becoming withdrawn, clingy, depressed, tearful, emotionally up and down, an unusual reluctance to attend our lessons/clubs/academies.
- An unexplained drop-off in performance or involvement.
- Physical signs such as stomach aches, headaches, difficulty in sleeping, bed wetting, scratching, and bruising, damaged clothes, bingeing e.g., on food, alcohol, or cigarettes.
- A shortage of money or frequent loss of possessions.

It must be recognised that the above list is not exhaustive, but also that the presence of one or more of the indications is not proof that abuse is taking place. It is NOT the responsibility of those working for Buzzers Academies to decide that child abuse is occurring. It is their responsibility to act on any concerns by reporting any incident to the Buzzers Academies Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as well as completing an 'Incident Report Form'.

How to respond to signs or suspicions of abuse –

Buzzers Academies staff may become aware of possible abuse in various ways. Staff may see it happening, may suspect it happening because of signs that they have noticed, or may have it reported by someone else or directly by the young person affected.

How to respond to allegations of abuse against a member of staff, another worker or volunteer –

When an allegation is received, the member of staff being told must tell the Buzzers Academies Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately and give them a copy of the written report. If this allegation has been received within a school setting, then the School Safeguarding Officer must also be informed.

Depending on the situation, Buzzers Academies reserves the right to immediately suspend staff if it is deemed appropriate.

Any suspicion, allegation or incident should be reported to the Buzzers Academies Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as soon as possible and recorded. It is the responsibility of the Buzzers Academies Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) without delay if deemed appropriate.

Where there is a complaint against a member of staff or volunteer, there may be three types of investigation:

- **Criminal** - In which case the police will be immediately involved.
- **Child Protection** - In which case Social Services and possibly the police will be involved.
- **Disciplinary or Misconduct** - In which case Buzzers Academies will be involved.

How to respond to allegations of abuse against someone not working in the group –

This may be a parent or carer, another child, schoolteacher, or anybody else.
When an allegation is received, the member of staff being told must tell the Buzzers Academies Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately and give them a copy of the written report. If this allegation has been received within a school setting, then the Buzzers Academies Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) must also be informed. It is the responsibility of the Buzzers Academies Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) without delay if deemed appropriate. If the child/young person is believed to be in immediate danger, the Police must be called straight away.

Please refer to the section 'Reporting the Concern' below for more details.

Buzzers Academies Ltd Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL): MATT WALKER
Telephone: 07930 397 185 **Email:** matt.walker@buzzers.org.uk

Buzzers Academies Ltd Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL): SALLY WALKER
Telephone: 07584 411 016 **Email:** sally.walker@buzzers.org.uk

Buzzers Academies Ltd Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL): ASHLEIGH CHEVANNES
Telephone: 07930 317 847 **Email:** ashleigh.chevannes@buzzers.org.uk

How to respond to a child/young person telling you about abuse –

When a young person reports directly to a Buzzers Academies member of staff, it is particularly important for the member of staff to respond appropriately. If a young person says or indicates that they are being abused, staff should:

- Stay calm so as not to frighten the young person.
- Reassure the young person that they are not to blame and that they are right to tell.
- Ensure the immediate safety of the child or young person.
- Take what the child or young person says seriously.
- Listen to the young person, showing that you are taking them seriously.
- Keep questions to a minimum so that there is a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said. (The law is very strict and child abuse cases have been dismissed where it is felt that the young person has been led, and ideas have been suggested when questioning). Only ask questions to clarify facts.
- Reassure the child or young person but do not make promises of confidentiality or outcome, which might not be feasible in the light of subsequent developments.
- Inform the young person that you must inform other people about what they have told you. Tell the young person this is to help stop the abuse continuing.
- Inform the parents/guardians immediately, unless you have specific reason not to e.g., the child has named the parent/guardian as the abuser. If this is the case, then contact the 'Emergency Contact' and the Buzzers Academies Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). If they are unavailable, contact local Children's Services or the Police for guidance.
- The safety of the young person is paramount. If the young person needs urgent medical attention call an ambulance, inform the doctors of their concern, and ensure they are made aware that this is a child protection issue.
- Record all information on the 'Incident Report Form'.
- Report the incident to the Buzzers Academies Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

How information will be recorded –

To ensure that information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern. In recording, you should confine yourself to the facts and distinguish what your personal knowledge is and what others have told you. Do not include your own opinions. All information should be stored confidentially. Recorded information should include the following:

- The young person's name, age, and date of birth.
- The young person's home address and telephone number (or parent/guardian number).
- Whether or not the person making the report expresses their concern or someone else's.
- The nature of the allegation, including dates, times, and any other relevant information.
- A description of any visible bruising or injury, including location, size etc. Also, any indirect signs, such as behavioral changes.
- Details of witnesses to the incident(s).
- Details of the young person's account (if it can be given), including what has happened and if/how any bruising/injuries occurred.
- Have the parents been contacted? If so, what has been said?
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record details.
- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details.

Reporting the concern –

All suspicions and allegations MUST be reported appropriately. It is recognised that strong emotions can be aroused particularly in cases where sexual abuse is suspected or where there is misplaced loyalty to a colleague. It is important to understand these feelings but not allow them to interfere with your judgement about any action to take.

If the situation should arise within a school setting, the Buzzers Academies' member of staff MUST tell the School Safeguarding Officer, as well as the Buzzers Academies Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). They will then decide together on a course of action, and who and what agencies should be told.

If the situation should arise during an independent Buzzers Academies activity, then the session leader should tell the Buzzers Academies Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as soon as possible. They will then make a judgement as to what agencies should be informed.

If it is felt that the child is in immediate danger, you must call 999 and request the Police.
Buzzers Academies will refer all allegations and cases to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The parent/guardian of the young person will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the Social Services department and/or all other agencies involved.

The Buzzers Academies Managing Director should be notified to decide who will deal with any media inquiries and implement any immediate disciplinary proceedings if needed.

If applicable, the Buzzers Academies Managing Director should notify the relevant sport's governing body. Buzzers Academies Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to the Buzzers Academies Managing Director or an appropriate member of senior management team, who will then refer the matter to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Confidentiality policy –

The legal principle is that the "*welfare of the child is paramount*." Privacy and confidentiality should be respected where possible but if doing this leaves a child at risk of harm, then the child's safety must come first. Remember, legally it is fine to share information if someone is worried about the safety of a child. Not everyone needs to know when a concern or worry is raised. This respects the child's, family and/or staff's rights to privacy. Only people who need to know should be told about a child protection allegation or case, otherwise there might be gossip and rumours, or other (unconnected) people may become concerned. It is fine to say that a concern has been raised, and it is being dealt with following our procedures.

It is not child protection, but I am still concerned –

Sometimes concerns about a child may not be about abuse. You may be concerned that a child or family needs some help in making sure all the child's needs are met to address a particular problem. Examples of this might be where a child is suffering because of poverty, getting into trouble in the community, or has a disability and needs extra help. In these instances, you can access support and guidance by using the Early Help Assessment.

If a child or young person needs extra support for a particular need, an Early Help Assessment form is filled in, and an action plan is made to decide on the best way of supporting them. This could be support with learning, or something else, such as a social or emotional matter. The idea is that the child and parents/guardians have the chance to say what they would like to happen and to explain what is working well for them and where they would like support. If you have a non-child protection concern, the Local Authority Information Sharing Team will be able to guide you.

Good practice –

By promoting good practice, the occurrence of abuse of young people should be reduced and Buzzers Academies staff will be better protected, thus reducing the likelihood of allegations arising. All Buzzers Academies staff should adhere to the following principles and actions:

- Always work in an open environment e.g., avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets.
- If in the scenario of a 1:1 (mentoring) situation, give some thought to the venue and environment where the session will take place. Avoid private, closed places; instead, meet in an open, transparent space.
- Make the experience of your session fun and enjoyable.
- Promote fairness, confront, and deal positively and proactively with bullying, harassment, or any other inappropriate behaviour.
- Treat all young people equally and with respect and dignity.
- Always put the welfare of the young person first.
- Maintain a safe and appropriate distance with children and young people e.g., it is not appropriate for staff or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a young person.

- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with young people. Where any form of manual/physical support is required, it should be provided openly and with the consent of the young person. Physical contact can be appropriate so long as it is neither intrusive nor disturbing and the young person's consent has been given.
- In extreme cases where a young person is becoming a danger to either themselves, other children or staff, appropriate physical contact can be made to eliminate any risks or danger to all individuals involved; to be judged lawful, the force of restraint used must be in proportion to the consequences it is intended to prevent.
- Keep up to date with the technical skills, qualifications, and insurance in sport.
- Never transport a young person in a personal vehicle unless in an emergency. In this case, it is the Buzzers Academies staff's responsibility to contact the young person's parents/guardians and the Buzzers Academies Manager Director before they transport the young person. If this incident does occur, then the young person must travel in the back seat of the vehicle.
- Be an excellent role model; this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people.
- Always give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Do not undertake any medical treatment on a young person, unless qualified to do so.
- Keep a written record of any injury that occurs, along with details of any treatment given. This should be written on the Minor Accident form.

Use of photographic / filming equipment –

There is evidence that sporting activities/events have been used as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young and disabled sports people in vulnerable positions. Therefore, Buzzers Academies is committed to adhering to the appropriate guidelines detailed below.

Recording images of young people

There are risks posed directly and indirectly to young people using photographs on websites and publications. Therefore, the following guidelines must be followed:

- All young people featured in photographs/recordings must be appropriately dressed for the activity they are undertaking.
- The photograph/recording should ideally focus on the activity. Where possible, images of young people should be recorded in small groups.

- Buzzers Academies staff will still be allowed to use video equipment as a legitimate coaching aid and means of recording special occasions with the written consent of parents/guardians and the young person.
- Care should be taken in the dissemination and storage of the material.

Publishing images of young people

If a photograph/recording is used, personal details of young people such as email address, home address and telephone numbers should never be revealed. Parental/guardian permission should always be received to take and use an image of their child. This ensures that parents/guardians are aware of the way the image of their child represents the sport, activity or Buzzers Academies as an organisation.

A parent/guardian photography permission question is included within the Buzzers Academies online booking system (Pebble) and is accessible/visible to all staff at the specific Club, Camp or session.

Where a story/image concerns an individual e.g., their selection for a representative side, triumph over adversity, particular attention should be paid to ensuring permission is gained from the parent/guardian and the young person to use a photograph and recording of relevant event details.

In order to guard against the possibility of a young person under a court order appearing on a website, the simultaneous streaming of images onto a website is not recommended. Delayed streaming also provides an opportunity for the editing of inappropriate clips e.g., disarranged clothing.

The use of photographic/filming equipment by the media –

There is evidence that sporting activities/events have been used as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young people. Therefore, the following guidelines will be followed by all Buzzers Academies staff:

- If professional photographers are commissioned or the press is invited to a sporting activity or event, it is important to ensure they are clear about their expectations in relation to the welfare of the young people.
- The photographer/camera person must have bona fide identification and be able to produce it on request.
- Participants and parents/guardians must be informed that a photographer/camera person will attend an event and ensure that they give written consent to both the taking and publication of any subsequent films or photographs.
- Buzzers Academies will not allow unsupervised access to participants or one-to-one photo sessions at any of their events or activities.
- Buzzers Academies will not approve/allow photography outside of the scheduled event operating times.

Safer Recruitment -

At Buzzers Academies Ltd, we are committed to ensuring the best possible environment for not only the children and young people that we teach, but also for our staff and volunteers. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people is our highest priority and our recruitment policy reflects this.

Buzzers Academies aims to recruit staff that share and understand our commitment to deliver professional Physical Education, Sports tuition, and school holiday childcare, and to ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly by reason of a protected characteristic as defined within the Equality Act 2010. All queries on our recruitment process must be directed to the company Managing Director. All checks are made in advance of an appointment or as soon as practicable after appointment.

At Buzzers Academies, we have a vision to provide children and young people with the highest level and professionalism of Physical Education, Sports tuition, and school holiday childcare possible, delivered by the best qualified and motivated PE tutors and sports coaches. Everything we do is driven by this vision.

All Buzzers Academies staff hold an Enhanced DBS certificate which is renewed every 2 years through the company's own application processing system.

All Buzzers Academies staff adhere to and follow the guidelines set out in the company **Safer Recruitment, Selection and Disclosures Policy**.

Kent and National services and Buzzers Academies Ltd contact numbers -

Buzzers Academies Ltd	Designated Safeguarding Lead – **Matt Walker**	07930 397185 matt.walker@buzzers.org.uk
	Deputy Safeguarding Leads – **Sally Walker** **Ashleigh Chevannes**	07584 411 016 sally.walker@buzzers.org.uk 07930 317 847 ashleigh.chevannes@buzzers.org.uk
Kent Police	Child Protection Investigation Unit	01622 690690
In an emergency dial 999		
Kent Children's Social Services	County Duty Service	0300 041 1111
National Help Lines	NSPCC	0808 800 5000
	NSPCC Textphone	0800 056 0566
	Child Line	0800 1111
Local Social Services Contact Details		
Kent Safeguarding Children's Board/Social Services (KSCB)	03000 411111 (Mon–Fri, 9-5) 03000 419191 (if out of hours)	**Local Authority Designated Officer - LADO** 03000 410888 kentchildrenslado@kent.gov.uk
Online Protection	03000 42 31 64	**West Kent**: Education Safeguarding Services 03000 42 31 58

This policy was reviewed and/or updated on 20/10/2026