

**Dwarf Sports Association UK (DSAuk)**

**Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy**

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**Ratified by Board of Trustees:**

**Signature of Association Manager:** T. Shephard

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**Lead Safeguarding Personnel**

- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) – Children:** Michael Pope, National Partnership Officer
- **Nominated Safeguarding Trustee:** Colin Brown
- **Deputy/Assistant Safeguarding Officers:**
  - Tim Shephard
  - Lisa Longley

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**1. Introduction**

The Dwarf Sports Association UK (DSAuk) is a National Disability Sports Organisation providing sport and physical activity opportunities for people with restricted growth. DSAuk exists to promote and develop sport for persons with dwarfism regardless of their location, ability, or financial means, and to improve quality of life through participation, education, and wellbeing.

DSAuk recognises its moral and legal responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and young people involved in its activities. We are committed to ensuring that all children are protected from harm, abuse, and exploitation, and that they can participate in sport in a safe, inclusive, and enjoyable environment.

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**DSAuk Mission Statement**

To make regular sporting opportunity accessible and enjoyable to anyone and everyone with dwarfism in the United Kingdom, regardless of their race, colour, ethnic origin, gender, location, sporting ability, or financial support.

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**DSAuk Aims and Objectives**

- To promote and develop sport for children and young people with dwarfism.
- To provide recreational and competitive sporting opportunities in a safe environment.

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- To support young athletes to train for and compete at national and international events, including the World Dwarf Games and Paralympic pathways.
- To ensure that safeguarding and child protection are integral to all DSAuk activities.

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### **2. Policy Statement**

DSAuk's priority is to ensure that all children and young people participating in our activities are safe, respected, and protected from harm.

We will:

- Promote the welfare of all children and young people.
- Take all reasonable steps to prevent abuse and neglect.
- Respond promptly and appropriately to safeguarding concerns.
- Work in partnership with parents/carers, local authorities, and other agencies.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their safeguarding responsibilities.

Any sporting activity promoted, endorsed, or delivered by DSAuk must comply with this Safeguarding Children Policy and have an associated Safeguarding Welfare Plan.

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#### **2.1 Who This Policy Applies To**

This policy applies to:

- All DSAuk staff, trustees, and volunteers.
- Coaches, officials, and activity leaders.
- Contractors and partner organisations delivering activities on behalf of DSAuk.
- Any adult working in a position of trust with children or young people.

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#### **2.2 Framework for Safeguarding Children**

DSAuk's safeguarding framework is informed by:

- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government)
- NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit guidance
- Sport and Recreation Alliance safeguarding standards

All activities must include:

- A Safeguarding Welfare Plan.
- Clear reporting and response procedures.
- Codes of conduct.

- Safe recruitment and vetting.
- Training and supervision.
- Access to safeguarding advice and support.

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### **2.3 Definitions**

**Child / Young Person:** Anyone under the age of 18.

**Safeguarding:** Protecting children from maltreatment, preventing impairment of health or development, and ensuring safe and effective care.

**Abuse:** A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm.

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### **2.4 Vulnerability**

Children with disabilities, including children with dwarfism, may be more vulnerable to abuse due to:

- Social isolation.
- Dependence on others for care or mobility.
- Communication difficulties.
- Reduced capacity to recognise or report abuse.

DSAuk recognises these additional risks and commits to putting enhanced safeguards in place.

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### **2.5 Promoting Good Practice**

All staff and volunteers must:

- Treat all children with respect and dignity.
- Put the welfare of the child first.
- Work in open and observable environments.
- Avoid private or unobserved situations.
- Obtain consent before providing physical support.
- Communicate appropriately and inclusively.
- Maintain professional boundaries at all times.

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### **2.6 Practices to Be Avoided**

Unless unavoidable in emergencies:

- Spending excessive time alone with a child.

- Transporting a child alone.
- Engaging in inappropriate physical or verbal contact.

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## **2.7 Actively Promoting the Welfare of Children and Young People**

DSAuk is committed to actively raising awareness of the welfare of children and young people in sport and physical activity.

DSAuk will do this by:

- Promoting safeguarding as a shared responsibility across all activities and roles.
- Ensuring that safeguarding information, guidance, and procedures are clearly communicated to staff, volunteers, children, and parents/carers.
- Providing appropriate safeguarding training and ongoing support to those working with children and young people.
- Encouraging an open culture where concerns about welfare are recognised, discussed, and reported without fear.
- Working in partnership with parents/carers and relevant organisations to promote safe, inclusive, and positive sporting environments.

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## **2.8 Involving Children and Young People**

DSAuk recognises the importance of listening to and involving children and young people in decisions that directly affect them within sport and physical activity.

DSAuk is committed to ensuring that children and young people are:

- Given opportunities to express their views on matters that affect their participation, safety, and wellbeing.
- Encouraged to be involved, where appropriate, in decisions relating to activities, events, and safeguarding practices that impact them.
- Listened to and taken seriously, with their views considered as part of decision-making processes.
- Supported to share their views in a way that is age-appropriate, inclusive, and accessible, recognising individual needs and abilities.

DSAuk will work in partnership with parents/carers and relevant stakeholders to ensure that children and young people feel respected, valued, and empowered to contribute to decisions that affect their sporting experience.

## **2.9 Working with Partners and Joint Activities**

DSAuk is committed to ensuring that its safeguarding stance is clearly communicated to all partners involved in the delivery of sport and physical activity for children and young people.

Where activities, events, or programmes are delivered in partnership with other organisations, including jointly owned or jointly managed events, DSAuk will ensure that:

- All partners are made aware of and agree to DSAuk's safeguarding expectations and standards.
- Safeguarding arrangements are agreed in advance, including roles and responsibilities, reporting procedures, and points of contact for safeguarding concerns.
- There is clarity about which organisation holds lead safeguarding responsibility for the activity or event.
- Safeguarding Welfare Plans and risk assessments reflect joint working arrangements where applicable.
- All staff and volunteers involved understand how to report concerns and which safeguarding procedures to follow.

DSAuk will work collaboratively with partners to ensure that safeguarding arrangements are robust, consistent, and effective, and that the welfare of children and young people remains the highest priority across all jointly delivered activities.

## **Promoting Safeguarding in Partnership Working**

DSAuk will actively promote safeguarding within all partnership working arrangements and will support partners to achieve and maintain minimum safeguarding standards, including through clear guidance, shared expectations, and access to safeguarding advice and support.

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## **2.10 Minimum Safeguarding Standards and Monitoring**

DSAuk is committed to maintaining **clear minimum safeguarding standards** across all areas of its work involving children and young people.

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These minimum safeguarding standards apply to:

- All DSAuk members, staff, trustees, and volunteers
- Partner organisations and contractors delivering activities on behalf of DSAuk
- Venue providers and leased or hired facilities used for DSAuk activities
- Funded programmes and activities supported, endorsed, or commissioned by DSAuk

As a minimum, all activities and organisations involved must:

- Comply with this Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy
- Have appropriate safeguarding procedures and reporting arrangements in place
- Ensure relevant staff and volunteers are safely recruited, vetted, and trained
- Operate with appropriate supervision, risk assessment, and safeguarding welfare planning

DSAuk will periodically monitor and review safeguarding arrangements to ensure standards are being met. This may include:

- Reviewing Safeguarding Welfare Plans and risk assessments
- Seeking assurance from partners, venues, and funded organisations
- Responding to concerns, incidents, or changes in guidance
- Reviewing safeguarding arrangements as part of funding, partnership, or activity evaluations

Where safeguarding standards are not met, DSAuk will take appropriate action to address concerns and protect the welfare of children and young people.

### **Supporting Partner Organisations with Safeguarding**

DSAuk is committed to supporting organisations it commissions, funds, or works with as members or stakeholders to develop and maintain effective safeguarding arrangements.

DSAuk will do this by:

- Providing clear safeguarding information and expectations
- Signposting to relevant safeguarding guidance and external support services
- Offering advice and support to help organisations meet minimum safeguarding standards

This support will help ensure safeguarding arrangements across DSAuk activities are consistent, robust, and effective.

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### **3. Safeguarding Welfare Plans**

All DSAuk activities must have a Safeguarding Welfare Plan that:

- Identifies safeguarding roles and responsibilities.
- Sets out reporting routes.
- Details supervision and ratios.
- Includes procedures for missing children and emergencies.

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### **3.1 Events, Away Trips, and Residential Activities**

DSAuk recognises that safeguarding responsibilities extend to all events, away trips, competitions, training camps, and residential activities involving children and young people.

- For any such activity, DSAuk will ensure that:
- A Safeguarding Welfare Plan is in place and specific to the event or trip.
- A risk assessment is completed, including travel, accommodation, supervision, and emergency procedures.
- Appropriate supervision ratios are maintained at all times.
- Parental/carer consent is obtained in advance, including consent for travel, accommodation, and medical treatment where required.
- Clear arrangements are in place for travel, ensuring children are not transported alone unless unavoidable and with prior consent.
- Accommodation arrangements are safe and appropriate, with clear sleeping and supervision arrangements.
- Procedures are in place for managing missing children, illness, injury, or safeguarding concerns during the event or trip.

- All staff and volunteers involved are suitably recruited, vetted, and trained, and understand their safeguarding responsibilities.

DSAuk will work in partnership with parents/carers and relevant partners to ensure that all events and away trips are delivered in a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment.

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#### **4. Responding to Safeguarding Concerns**

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

If a child is at immediate risk, call emergency services.

All concerns must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

##### **Take Action**

- Listen carefully.
- Take it seriously.
- Do not promise confidentiality.
- Reassure the child.

##### **Tell Someone**

- Report immediately to the DSL.

##### **Take a Note**

- Record what was said or observed.
- Sign and date the record.

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#### **4.1 Types of Abuse**

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Bullying and cyberbullying
- Grooming
- Exploitation

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#### **4.2 Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis in line with GDPR and safeguarding legislation.

#### **4.3 Whistleblowing**

All concerns about poor practice or abuse must be reported and will be taken seriously.

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#### **4.4 Missing Children**

All activities must have procedures for missing children, including supervision and emergency response.

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#### **4.5 Getting Help, Advice, and Support**

DSAuk is committed to ensuring that children and young people know where to go for help and advice if they are worried about abuse, harassment, bullying, or any behaviour that makes them feel uncomfortable or unsafe.

Children and young people involved in DSAuk activities are encouraged to:

- Speak to a trusted adult, such as a coach, volunteer, or parent/carer.
- Talk to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or another safeguarding officer if they feel able to do so.
- Contact Childline on 0800 1111, a free, confidential service available to children and young people at any time.
- Use external support services such as the NSPCC, which provide advice and support about abuse and safeguarding.

Children and young people will be reassured that:

- They will be listened to and taken seriously
- They will not be blamed for raising a concern
- They can ask for help even if they are unsure whether something is wrong

Information about safeguarding contacts and support services will be shared in a way that is accessible and age-appropriate.

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## **5. Code of Conduct**

All staff and volunteers must:

- Act as positive role models.
- Respect children's rights.
- Follow safeguarding procedures.

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### **5.1 Recruitment and Training**

DSAuk will:

- Use safe recruitment practices.
- Require DBS checks where appropriate.
- Provide safeguarding training.

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## **6. Photography and Media**

Images of children will only be used with parental consent and in line with DSAuk policy.

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### **6.1 Online Safety and Social Media**

DSAuk recognises that children and young people may be exposed to safeguarding risks through online activity, including social media, messaging platforms, gaming, and other digital communication.

DSAuk is committed to promoting online safety and ensuring that children and young people are protected from harm when engaging in online activity connected to DSAuk.

DSAuk will ensure that:

- All staff, volunteers, and adults in positions of trust maintain professional boundaries online and do not engage in inappropriate or private online communication with children or young people.
- Communication with children and young people is transparent, appropriate, and where possible conducted through parents/carers or approved channels.
- Children and young people are protected from online abuse, including cyberbullying, grooming, exploitation, and inappropriate content.

- Any concerns relating to online behaviour, digital communication, or social media use are treated as safeguarding concerns and reported in line with this policy.
- Images, videos, or personal information relating to children and young people are not shared online without appropriate consent and in accordance with DSAuk policies.

Parents/carers and children will be encouraged to report any online safety concerns, including concerns arising outside organised activities, where these may impact a child's welfare within DSAuk.

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## 7. Supporting Resources

- NSPCC – [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)
- NSPCC CPSU – [thecpsu.org.uk](http://thecpsu.org.uk)
- Childline – 0800 1111

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## 8. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or following a serious safeguarding incident.

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