



SPORTSLINK

Our Policies

Inspiring communities through sports!

Safeguarding, conduct, health & safety, equality, data protection and complaints — how Sportslink keeps children, young people and adults safe.

Sportslink

102 Mile End Road, London, E1 4UN
Company No. 08096805

Version 1.0 · October 2026

WhatsApp 07985401386
info@sportslink.org.uk

Contents

01	Code of Conduct	3
02	Children's Safeguarding Policy	5
03	Adult Safeguarding Policy	7
04	Lost Child Policy	9
05	Health & Safety Policy	11
06	Zero Tolerance Policy	13
07	Equality & Diversity Policy	14
08	Data Protection Policy	16
09	Behaviour Policy	18
10	Complaints Procedure	20

About these policies. Sportslink delivers sport, youth work, learning and community support in Tower Hamlets, including from Meath Gardens Park and in local schools. These policies apply to everyone who works with, volunteers for, or takes part in our activities.

They are reviewed every year and whenever the law or guidance changes. The latest version is always available from the Sportslink website.

WHATSAPP

07985401386

EMAIL

info@sportslink.org.uk

REGISTERED OFFICE102 Mile End Road, London, E1
4UN

POLICY 01

Code of Conduct

VERSION 1.0	APPROVED October 2026	NEXT REVIEW October 2027
APPLIES TO All staff, coaches, volunteers, participants, parents, carers and spectators		

Sportslink exists to inspire communities through sport. This Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour we expect from everyone involved in our sessions at Meath Gardens Park, in local schools and at any other venue where we work, so that every child, young person and adult can take part safely and with respect.

Our values

- **Respect** – we treat everyone fairly and listen to each other.
- **Safety** – the wellbeing of children and adults at risk always comes first.
- **Inclusion** – everyone is welcome, whatever their background, ability, faith, gender or age.
- **Integrity** – we are honest, reliable and accountable for what we do.
- **Enjoyment and progress** – we help people have fun, build confidence and develop skills.

Staff, coaches and volunteers will

- Put the welfare of participants before winning, performance or personal interests.
- Treat every participant with dignity and respect, and be a positive role model in language, dress and conduct.
- Work in an open environment: avoid being alone and out of sight with a child, and never work one-to-one behind closed doors.
- Follow the Children's Safeguarding, Adult Safeguarding, Health & Safety and Data Protection policies at all times.
- Hold a valid enhanced DBS check and complete safeguarding training before working with children or adults at risk.
- Keep appropriate boundaries and use physical contact only when necessary for safety or coaching, in an open setting and with the participant's understanding.
- Report any concern, accident, injury or breach of this Code to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or session lead straight away.
- Arrive on time, prepared and fit to work – never attend under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Staff, coaches and volunteers must never

- Use physical punishment, shout in a way that frightens, humiliate, ridicule or discriminate.
- Use abusive, sexualised, discriminatory or inappropriate language or gestures.
- Start or accept a private or secret relationship with a child or young person, or contact them privately through social media, messaging or phone without a parent or carer being aware and the organisation's agreement.
- Give or accept expensive gifts, alcohol, tobacco, vapes or drugs.
- Transport a child alone in a vehicle unless it has been agreed in advance with the DSL and the parent or carer.
- Take photographs or video of participants for personal use, or share images without consent.

Children and young people are asked to

-
- Respect coaches, volunteers, other players, officials and equipment.
 - Play fairly, follow the rules and accept decisions without arguing.
 - Never bully, tease, exclude or use unkind or discriminatory language – in person or online.
 - Listen to instructions, stay within the session area and tell a coach if they need to leave.
 - Tell a coach or another trusted adult if they are worried, hurt or feel unsafe.

Parents, carers and spectators are asked to

- Support children's enjoyment: encourage effort and fair play, not just winning.
- Respect decisions made by coaches and officials and never shout abuse or criticise players.
- Keep to spectator areas, and let coaches know about any medical needs, concerns or changes to collection arrangements.
- Collect children on time and tell us in advance if someone else will collect them.
- Not take photographs of other people's children without permission, and never post images that identify children without parental consent.
- Not attend sessions under the influence of alcohol or drugs, and not smoke or vape near children.

Photography and social media

Sportslink will only photograph or film participants where written consent has been given by the participant or, for under-18s, a parent or carer. Images are used to promote our work and are stored securely. Children's full names are never published alongside photographs. Staff must use official Sportslink accounts and devices for any publicity images.

What happens if the Code is broken

Breaches will be dealt with fairly and proportionately under our Behaviour Policy, Zero Tolerance Policy and, for staff and volunteers, our disciplinary procedures. Serious breaches, and anything that puts a child or adult at risk, may be referred to the police, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or the Disclosure and Barring Service.

POLICY 02

Children's Safeguarding Policy

VERSION 1.0	APPROVED October 2026	NEXT REVIEW October 2027
APPLIES TO All trustees/directors, staff, coaches, volunteers and contractors working with children and young people under 18		

Sportslink is committed to the safety and welfare of every child and young person who takes part in our activities. Every child has the right to be protected from harm, abuse and neglect, whatever their age, disability, gender, race, religion, belief, sexual orientation or background. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Legal and policy framework

This policy is based on the Children Act 1989 and 2004, the Protection of Children Act 1999, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, Working Together to Safeguard Children (statutory guidance), Keeping Children Safe in Education (where we work in schools), and the procedures of the Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership. We follow the standards set by the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit.

Roles and responsibilities

- **The Directors** are responsible for ensuring this policy is in place, followed and reviewed at least once a year.
- **The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** is the first point of contact for any concern, makes referrals to children's social care and the police, keeps confidential records and ensures staff are trained. A named deputy covers in the DSL's absence. Contact details are displayed at every session and given to parents and carers on registration.
- **All staff and volunteers** must read this policy, complete safeguarding training, and report every concern immediately.

Safe recruitment

- Every role working with children is advertised with a clear role description and a safeguarding statement.
- Applicants complete an application form and are interviewed; we take up two references and check identity and right to work.
- An enhanced DBS check (with barred-list check where eligible) is completed before anyone starts unsupervised work.
- New starters complete an induction covering this policy, the Code of Conduct and emergency procedures, and refresh safeguarding training at least every two years.
- Volunteers under 18 are never left in sole charge of children and are supervised by a DBS-checked adult.

Recognising abuse

Abuse may be physical, emotional, sexual or neglect, and can occur in families, communities, online or in organisations. We are also alert to bullying and cyberbullying, child sexual and criminal exploitation (including county lines), female genital mutilation, forced marriage, domestic abuse, radicalisation and peer-on-peer abuse. Possible signs include unexplained injuries, sudden changes in behaviour or attendance, fear of going home, withdrawal, inappropriate sexual knowledge, poor hygiene or hunger, or having unexplained money or gifts. These signs do not prove abuse, but they must always be reported.

What to do if a child tells you something or you are worried

1. **Listen** calmly and take it seriously. Let the child speak at their own pace; do not ask leading questions.
2. **Reassure** the child that they were right to tell you. Never promise to keep it secret – explain you must tell someone who can help.
3. **Do not investigate** or confront the person alleged to be responsible.
4. **Record** what was said, using the child's own words, along with the date, time and place. Sign and date the record the same day.
5. **Report** to the DSL immediately. If the DSL is unavailable or the concern is about them, go to the deputy or direct to children's social care or the police.
6. **Refer:** the DSL will decide whether to refer to Tower Hamlets Children's Social Care (MAST) without delay, and will follow up in writing within 24 hours. If a child is in immediate danger, call **999**.

Key contacts

Emergency: 999 | Police (non-emergency): 101 | Tower Hamlets MAST (children's social care), weekdays 9am–5pm: 020 7364 5601 | Emergency Duty Team (evenings, weekends, bank holidays): 020 7364 5606 | NSPCC helpline: 0808 800 5000 | Childline: 0800 1111. Numbers are checked at each annual review.

Allegations against staff or volunteers

Any allegation or concern about the conduct of an adult working with children must be reported to the DSL (or a Director if it concerns the DSL) immediately. The DSL will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for Tower Hamlets on 020 7364 0677 or LADO@towerhamlets.gov.uk within one working day. The person concerned is not told of the allegation until advice has been taken. Sportslink will suspend or move an individual from contact with children where needed to protect children, and will refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service where the legal test is met. Concerns about poor practice are raised in the same way and are never ignored.

Safe practice at sessions

- At least two DBS-checked adults are present at every session, with ratios in line with NSPCC guidance (typically 1:8 for children aged 4–8 and 1:10 for older children), and lower ratios for younger children, children with additional needs, or higher-risk activities.
- Registers are taken at the start and end of each session, and children are only released to the adults named on their registration form.
- Changing rooms are supervised from outside where possible; adults do not change or shower with children, and children and adults use separate facilities.
- Transport and trips are risk assessed in advance, parents are informed, and ratios are increased.
- Online contact and social media follow the Code of Conduct. Staff do not befriend or privately message children.
- Children with additional needs or disabilities have individual plans so they can take part safely.

Records and confidentiality

Safeguarding records are kept securely, separate from general files, and shared only with those who need to know (the DSL, statutory agencies and, where appropriate, the Directors). Records are retained in line with our Data Protection Policy. Information is shared with agencies when needed to protect a child, even without consent, in line with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Review

This policy is reviewed every year, after any serious incident, and when the law or statutory guidance changes.

POLICY 03

Adult Safeguarding Policy

VERSION 1.0	APPROVED October 2026	NEXT REVIEW October 2027
APPLIES TO All trustees/directors, staff, coaches, volunteers and contractors working with adults, including parents, carers and adult participants		

Sportslink also works with adults – through coffee mornings, advice sessions, employment and training support and community sport. We are committed to protecting any adult at risk of abuse or neglect, and to supporting every adult to make their own choices and live free from harm.

Legal framework

This policy follows the Care Act 2014 and its statutory guidance, the Mental Capacity Act 2005, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 and the multi-agency procedures of the Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Adults Board.

Who is an adult at risk?

An adult at risk is a person aged 18 or over who has care and support needs (whether or not the local authority is meeting them), who is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and who, because of those needs, is unable to protect themselves. Risk may relate to age, disability, illness, mental health, learning difficulty, addiction, isolation, or being in an abusive relationship.

Our six safeguarding principles

- **Empowerment** – adults are supported to make their own decisions and give informed consent.
- **Prevention** – we act early to prevent harm.
- **Proportionality** – we respond in the least intrusive way that is appropriate to the risk.
- **Protection** – we support and represent those in greatest need.
- **Partnership** – we work with local communities and agencies.
- **Accountability** – we are open and transparent about what we do.

Types of abuse and neglect

Physical abuse; domestic abuse (including coercive control and so-called honour-based abuse); sexual abuse; psychological or emotional abuse; financial or material abuse (including scams); modern slavery and trafficking; discriminatory abuse and hate crime; organisational abuse; neglect and acts of omission; and self-neglect. Abuse can be committed by family, friends, carers, professionals, volunteers, strangers or other service users.

If you have a concern

1. **Make sure the person is safe.** If someone is in immediate danger or needs urgent medical help, call **999**.
2. **Listen** and stay calm. Do not promise confidentiality. Explain who you will need to tell and why.

3. **Ask the adult what they want to happen** and whether they consent to a referral. Consent should be sought unless it would put someone at greater risk, there is a crime, others (including children) are at risk, or the person lacks capacity to decide.
4. **Record** the facts: what you saw or heard, in the person's own words, with date, time and place. Do not investigate.
5. **Report** to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) the same day.
6. **Refer:** the DSL decides whether to refer to Tower Hamlets Adult Social Care through Tower Hamlets Connect and/or the police, and records the decision and the reasons.

Key contacts

Emergency: 999 | Police (non-emergency): 101 | Tower Hamlets Connect (adults at risk), weekdays 9am–5pm: 0300 303 6070, enquiry@towerhamletsconnect.org | Out of hours: 020 7364 4079. Numbers are checked at each annual review.

Mental capacity and consent

We always presume an adult has capacity unless it has been shown otherwise. Anyone who may lack capacity for a particular decision is supported to be involved as far as possible, and any action taken on their behalf is in their best interests under the Mental Capacity Act 2005. Where an adult with capacity refuses a referral, the DSL will respect that decision unless one of the exceptions above applies, and will offer information about other support.

Safe recruitment and practice

- Staff and volunteers in regulated activity with adults are recruited safely, including references and, where eligible, an enhanced DBS check.
- All staff and volunteers receive safeguarding awareness training at induction and refresh it regularly.
- Staff must not lend or borrow money, accept gifts of value, or become involved in an adult's finances, and must keep professional boundaries.
- Allegations about a member of staff or volunteer are reported to the DSL (or a Director) immediately and referred to the appropriate agencies.

Confidentiality and whistleblowing

Information is shared only on a need-to-know basis and in line with our Data Protection Policy. Anyone who raises a concern in good faith will be supported and protected from reprisal. Concerns about the DSL or Directors can be taken directly to Tower Hamlets Connect, the police or the relevant regulator.

Review

This policy is reviewed annually, after any serious incident, and when the law or local procedures change.

POLICY 04

Lost Child Policy

VERSION

1.0

APPROVED

October 2026

NEXT REVIEW

October 2027

APPLIES TO

All staff, coaches and volunteers at every Sportslink session, trip and event

Meath Gardens Park is a public open space, and our sessions take place in parks, schools and on trips. This policy explains how we prevent a child going missing, and exactly what we do if a child is lost or goes missing from a session – or if a lost child is found by us.

Prevention

- Take a register and a headcount at the start of every session, after every break or change of activity, and at the end.
- Define the session boundaries clearly and explain them to children at the start. Children must ask before leaving the area, including to use the toilet.
- Hold an up-to-date emergency contact number for every child, and carry the contact list (printed or secure phone) at every session.
- Keep an adult at the entrances or on the gate where possible, and keep ratios in line with the Children's Safeguarding Policy.
- Only release children to the adults named on the registration form; if a different person arrives, contact the parent or carer first.
- On trips: allocate children to named adults, use a buddy system, give children the session lead's mobile number and a meeting point, do a headcount before and after every transfer, and use identifying bibs or wristbands.

If a child is missing from a session

1. **Stay calm and act at once.** Tell the session lead immediately and do a full headcount to confirm the child is really missing.
2. **Keep the rest of the group safe.** One adult stays with the group at all times; the group is never left unsupervised.
3. **Search** the immediate area: toilets, changing rooms, pitch, play areas, entrances and exits. Ask the other children when and where they last saw the child. Assign adults to search specific areas, keeping in touch by phone.
4. **Call the parent or carer** and tell them what has happened, if the child has not been found within **5 minutes**.
5. **Call the police on 999 if the child is not found within 10 minutes** of being missed – or immediately if there is any sign the child may be in danger or has left with someone. Provide the child's name, age, description, clothing, last known location and any needs or medical conditions.
6. **Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**, who takes charge of communication with the family and the police.
7. **Stay available** and do not discuss the incident with the media or on social media.

When the child is found

- Check the child is safe and well, give first aid if needed, and reassure them. Do not shout or punish.
- Tell the police and the parent or carer immediately, and arrange for the child to be collected.

-
- Ask the child, kindly, what happened. Any safeguarding concern is passed to the DSL.

If we find a lost child who is not ours

- Stay with the child in an open, visible place with another adult. Do not leave them alone, and do not take them away from the area.
- Ask the child their name and who they are with. Check nearby for a worried adult and ask the park staff to help.
- If a parent cannot be found within a few minutes, call the police on 101 (or 999 if the child is in danger) and wait with the child until officers arrive.

After an incident

The session lead completes an incident report the same day, covering times, actions and who was informed. The DSL and a Director review what happened, tell the parents or carers what has been learned, and update risk assessments and procedures. Where there are safeguarding concerns, the Children's Safeguarding Policy is also followed.

POLICY 05

Health & Safety Policy

VERSION 1.0	APPROVED October 2026	NEXT REVIEW October 2027
APPLIES TO All Directors, staff, coaches, volunteers, participants, parents, carers and visitors		

Sportslink will take all reasonably practicable steps to provide a safe and healthy environment for everyone who takes part in, delivers or watches our activities. We comply with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the regulations made under it.

Responsibilities

- **The Directors** are responsible for the overall policy, for providing resources and insurance, and for reviewing it at least once a year.
- **The Health & Safety lead** oversees risk assessments, equipment checks, accident records and training.
- **The session lead** carries out the pre-session check, keeps the register, and takes charge in any emergency.
- **All staff and volunteers** must follow safe working practices, report hazards and accidents, and never put themselves or others at risk.
- **Participants and parents or carers** are asked to follow instructions, wear suitable clothing and footwear, and tell us about any medical conditions.

Risk assessment

A written risk assessment is completed for every venue and activity before it takes place, including Meath Gardens Park, the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA), school halls and trips. It identifies hazards, who might be harmed, controls needed and who is responsible. Risk assessments are reviewed at least every year, after any incident or near miss, and when activities, venues or equipment change.

Before every session

- Walk the playing area and remove or report hazards such as glass, litter, animal fouling, needles, wet or damaged surfaces and loose fixtures.
- Check goalposts are stable and secured, nets and equipment are in good condition, and that any gates are locked or supervised.
- Check the weather and adapt or cancel for extreme heat, cold, ice, high winds or lightning.
- Make sure the first aid kit, registers, medical information and emergency contact numbers are to hand and a phone is charged.
- Confirm the ratio of adults to children and who is the first aider.

First aid and medical needs

- A qualified first aider (holding a current first aid certificate – paediatric where working with young children) is present at every session, and first aid kits are checked and restocked regularly.

-
- Medical information is collected on registration (conditions, allergies, medication and consent to treatment). Inhalers, adrenaline auto-injectors and other medication are kept accessible and used only as directed by the parent or carer and medical advice.
 - Participants should be given regular access to drinking water.

Accidents, incidents and near misses

All accidents, injuries, illnesses and near misses are recorded in the accident book or report form as soon as possible, with the parent or carer informed on the same day. Serious injuries, dangerous occurrences and certain illnesses are reported by the Directors under RIDDOR 2013. In a medical emergency, call **999**, give first aid and stay with the casualty until help arrives.

Fire and emergency procedures

- At each venue we know the nearest exits, assembly point and location of fire equipment; children are told where to go and are counted at the assembly point.
- In an emergency the session lead raises the alarm, calls 999, evacuates everyone and takes the register and contact list.
- Nobody re-enters the building or area until it is declared safe.

Equipment, hygiene and lone working

- Equipment is checked regularly, used only for its intended purpose and removed from use if damaged.
- Participants wear appropriate footwear and kit; jewellery is removed or covered, and shin pads are recommended for football.
- Handwashing and cleaning facilities are available; spillages are cleaned safely using gloves.
- Lone working is avoided wherever possible; where unavoidable it is risk assessed, with check-in arrangements.

Insurance and training

Sportslink holds public liability insurance and employer's liability insurance where required. Staff and volunteers receive health and safety induction, first aid and emergency training suited to their role, and records of training are kept.

POLICY 06

Zero Tolerance Policy

VERSION 1.0	APPROVED October 2026	NEXT REVIEW October 2027
APPLIES TO All parents, carers, participants, spectators, visitors and members of the public attending Sportslink activities, and everyone who works for Sportslink		

Sportslink staff and volunteers work hard to provide safe, welcoming activities. They have the right to do their jobs without fear of abuse, threats or violence. We operate a zero tolerance approach to abusive, threatening or violent behaviour towards our staff, volunteers, participants and others at our sessions.

What we consider unacceptable

- Verbal abuse, swearing aimed at a person, shouting, intimidation or threats.
- Physical aggression or violence, or damage to property.
- Racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, ableist, religious or other discriminatory language or behaviour.
- Harassment, bullying, stalking or persistent unwanted contact, including by phone, WhatsApp, email and social media.
- Posting abusive, defamatory or threatening comments about Sportslink or anyone connected with it online.
- Attending a session under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, or bringing weapons or illegal items.

What we will do

- 1. Stop and protect.** The session lead will calmly ask the person to stop. Children and others are moved to safety if needed.
- 2. Warn.** Where appropriate the person is told their behaviour is unacceptable and may lead to removal from the session.
- 3. Remove.** Anyone who continues, or who commits a serious incident, will be asked to leave. The police will be called on 999 if there is violence, a threat to life, or a crime in progress.
- 4. Record.** The incident is written up the same day and reviewed by the Directors.
- 5. Act.** Depending on the seriousness, we may give a formal written warning, ban a person (or their child if appropriate) from sessions or sites, restrict contact to one nominated person, and report matters to the police or other agencies. We will always consider the welfare of any child involved before deciding.

Support for staff and volunteers

Anyone who experiences abuse will be listened to and supported by the Directors. They are not expected to put up with abuse and may stop or end a session if they feel unsafe. We will help them to report the incident to the police and make time to talk about it afterwards.

Fairness

Anyone who is the subject of action under this policy will be told the reason in writing and may ask the Directors to review the decision through our Complaints Procedure. This policy does not prevent anyone from making a genuine complaint in a respectful way.

POLICY 07

Equality & Diversity Policy

VERSION 1.0	APPROVED October 2026	NEXT REVIEW October 2027
APPLIES TO All Directors, staff, coaches, volunteers, participants, partners and contractors		

Sportslink serves one of the most diverse communities in the country. We believe sport is for everyone. We are committed to promoting equality of opportunity, valuing diversity, and tackling discrimination in everything we do, in line with the Equality Act 2010.

Our commitments

- We will not discriminate, directly or indirectly, or harass or victimise anyone because of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation – the nine protected characteristics.
- We will welcome participants, staff and volunteers from all backgrounds, and treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- We will make reasonable adjustments so that disabled people and people with additional needs can take part.
- We will challenge prejudice, stereotyping, bullying and discriminatory language wherever we see it.

In our services

- **Open access:** sessions are free or low-cost wherever possible so that cost does not prevent taking part.
- **Girls and women:** we run girls-only and women-only sessions and provide female coaches where possible, so more girls and women can take part in sport.
- **Faith and culture:** we respect religious practice, such as fasting, prayer times and modest dress, and plan activities, kit and facilities with this in mind.
- **Disability and additional needs:** we work with families and specialist partners to adapt activities and venues.
- **Language:** we use plain English, and work with volunteers and community partners to help people who speak other languages.
- **Age:** our programmes include children, young people and adults.

Recruitment and employment

Recruitment, selection, training and promotion of staff and volunteers is based on merit, fairness and the requirements of the role. Vacancies are advertised widely and we aim for a team that reflects the community we serve. All staff and volunteers are given equality and diversity awareness as part of their induction.

Responsibilities

The Directors have overall responsibility for this policy. Everyone who works with Sportslink must comply with it, avoid discriminatory behaviour and report any concerns. Participants and families are expected to respect others, as set out in our Code of Conduct and Behaviour Policy.

Reporting discrimination

Anyone who experiences or sees discrimination, harassment or victimisation can report it to a coach, the session lead or a Director, in person, by WhatsApp on 07985401386 or by email to info@sportslink.org.uk. Reports are taken seriously, handled in confidence as far as possible, and no one will be treated badly for raising a concern in good faith. Matters are dealt with through our Complaints Procedure, Behaviour Policy or disciplinary procedures as appropriate.

Monitoring and review

We monitor who takes part in our services through registration information, and use this to make improvements and reach people who may be missing out. This policy is reviewed annually.

POLICY 08

Data Protection Policy

VERSION 1.0	APPROVED October 2026	NEXT REVIEW October 2027
APPLIES TO All Directors, staff, coaches, volunteers and contractors who handle personal information for Sportslink		

Sportslink collects and uses personal information about participants, parents and carers, supporters, staff and volunteers. We respect people's privacy and handle information lawfully, fairly and securely, in line with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

What information we hold

- Registration details: names, dates of birth, addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, parent or guardian details and emergency contacts.
- **Special category data** such as health conditions, allergies, access needs, and information about ethnicity or religion collected for equality monitoring – handled with extra care.
- Safeguarding, accident and incident records.
- Petition signatures, messages sent through our website or WhatsApp, and campaign supporter details.
- Photographs and videos of participants and events.
- Staff and volunteer information, including recruitment records, references and DBS check results.

Our principles

We make sure personal data is: processed lawfully, fairly and transparently; collected for specific, clear purposes; adequate and limited to what is needed; accurate and up to date; kept no longer than necessary; and held securely.

Why we use information (lawful bases)

- **Consent** – for example for photographs, newsletters and petition updates. Consent can be withdrawn at any time.
- **Legitimate interests** – running our services and keeping participants safe.
- **Legal obligation** – such as health and safety, safeguarding and employment law.
- **Vital interests** – to protect someone's life in an emergency.
- Special category data is processed only with explicit consent, or where the law allows, for example for safeguarding or in a medical emergency.

Keeping information safe

- Paper records are kept in a locked cabinet; electronic records are on password-protected devices and accounts with restricted access.
- Only people who need information to do their role can see it. Safeguarding records are kept separately and only shared with those who need to know.
- Staff and volunteers do not keep personal data on personal devices or share it over personal messaging apps unless approved by the Directors.
- Information is never sold, and is shared with third parties only where we have consent, a legal duty (such as a safeguarding referral), or a contract with a trusted supplier.

How long we keep information

- Registration and attendance records: while a person takes part and for one year afterwards.
- Accident and incident records for children: until the child is 21; for adults, three years.
- Safeguarding records: in line with statutory guidance, normally until the child reaches 25 – longer where required.
- Staff and volunteer records: six years after they leave.
- Petition and supporter details: until the campaign ends or the person asks us to delete them.
- After this period, records are securely deleted or shredded.

Individual rights

Everyone has the right to be informed, to see the information we hold (a subject access request), to have it corrected, to have it deleted in certain circumstances, to restrict or object to its use, and to data portability. Parents and carers may act for young children. We respond to requests within one month. To make a request, contact us using the details below.

Data breaches

Any loss, theft or unauthorised sharing of personal information must be reported to a Director immediately. Where there is a risk to people's rights, we report the breach to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) within 72 hours and tell the people affected.

Complaints about how we use information

If you are unhappy with how we have handled your information, please contact us first. You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office: www.ico.org.uk, telephone 0303 123 1113.

POLICY 09

Behaviour Policy

VERSION

1.0

APPROVED

October 2026

NEXT REVIEW

October 2027

APPLIES TO

All children, young people and adult participants, and the staff and volunteers who supervise them

Our sessions should be safe, fair and fun for everyone. This policy explains the behaviour we expect from participants, how we encourage good behaviour, and how we respond fairly and consistently when behaviour falls short. It works alongside the Code of Conduct.

Our aims

- To create a positive environment where everyone feels safe, respected and included.
- To encourage children and young people to take responsibility for their own behaviour.
- To respond to unacceptable behaviour in a way that is fair, consistent and appropriate to the person's age and needs.

What we expect from participants

- Listen to and follow instructions from coaches and staff.
- Be kind and respectful to others, including other players, officials and parents.
- Play by the rules, play fairly and accept refereeing decisions.
- Look after equipment, facilities and the park.
- Stay in the session area and with the group unless a coach has given permission.
- Never use or bring weapons, alcohol, drugs, tobacco or vapes.

Encouraging positive behaviour

Coaches model good behaviour and notice and praise effort, teamwork, respect and sportsmanship. We use clear rules agreed with children, rewards such as certificates, and opportunities for leadership and volunteering.

Responding to unacceptable behaviour

Our response depends on the behaviour, the person's age, and their individual needs. Steps are usually:

1. A calm reminder of the expected behaviour and the reasons.
2. A clear verbal warning, with a chance to correct the behaviour.
3. A short time-out from the activity, in sight of a coach.
4. A conversation with the participant and, for under-18s, the parent or carer.
5. Temporary exclusion from a session or a number of sessions.
6. A review meeting and behaviour agreement. If behaviour does not improve, or in cases of serious misconduct, a longer suspension or permanent exclusion may be decided by the Directors.

Serious behaviour, including violence, serious bullying, theft, or anything unsafe, may mean skipping steps. The police or other agencies may be contacted where necessary.

What we will never do

- Use or threaten physical punishment, or shake, hit or restrain a child as a punishment.
- Humiliate, shout in a frightening way, label or single out a child in front of others.
- Withhold food, drink, toilet breaks or first aid.
- Use collective punishment for an individual's behaviour.

Physical intervention is used only as a last resort, to prevent immediate harm to the child or others, using the minimum force necessary for the shortest time. It is always recorded and reported to the parent or carer and the Designated Safeguarding Lead the same day.

Bullying

Bullying, including cyberbullying, name-calling and discrimination, is never accepted. Anyone can report bullying to a coach. We will investigate, support both the child who has been bullied and the child who has bullied, and work with parents or carers to resolve it.

Additional needs

We recognise that some behaviour may be linked to additional needs, disability, trauma or other circumstances. We work with families to understand the cause, make reasonable adjustments and agree an individual plan. Where behaviour suggests a child may be at risk, we follow the Children's Safeguarding Policy.

Records and appeals

Incidents above a minor reminder are recorded, and parents or carers are told. Parents, carers and participants can ask for a decision to be reviewed by writing to the Directors, who will respond under our Complaints Procedure.

POLICY 10

Complaints Procedure

VERSION 1.0	APPROVED October 2026	NEXT REVIEW October 2027
APPLIES TO Participants, parents, carers, volunteers, partners and members of the public		

Sportslink wants to provide the best possible service. If something goes wrong, or you are unhappy with something we have done (or not done), we want to hear about it so we can put it right and learn from it. Everyone has the right to complain, and no one will be treated unfairly for doing so.

What you can complain about

Any aspect of our work – for example the quality of a session, the behaviour or attitude of a member of staff or volunteer, how a decision was made, communication, safety, or how we have dealt with your information.

How to contact us

WhatsApp: 07985401386 | Email: info@sportslink.org.uk | Post: Sportslink, 102 Mile End Road, London, E1 4UN
| In person: speak to the session lead or any coach at a session.

Stage 1 – Informal resolution

Most concerns can be resolved quickly by talking to the session lead or the person involved. Tell us what happened and what you would like us to do. We will try to resolve the matter at once, or within **5 working days**, and will explain what we have done.

Stage 2 – Formal complaint

1. If you are not satisfied, or prefer to make a formal complaint, write to the Directors (by email, post or message) giving your name, contact details, what happened, when, who was involved and what you would like to happen.
2. We will **acknowledge your complaint within 3 working days**.
3. A Director who was not involved will investigate: gather information, speak to the people involved and, if you wish, meet with you.
4. We will give you a **written response within 20 working days**, explaining what we found, what action we will take and why. If we need longer, we will tell you why and when to expect an answer.

Stage 3 – Review

If you are still unhappy with how your complaint was handled, you can ask for a review within 20 working days of receiving our response. The review is carried out by a panel of Directors, or an independent person where the complaint concerns a Director, who will give you a final written decision within 20 working days.

Complaints about safeguarding

If your complaint raises a concern about the safety or welfare of a child or an adult at risk, it will be passed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead straight away and handled under our Children's Safeguarding Policy or Adult Safeguarding Policy. Allegations against a member of staff or volunteer are reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). If you are worried about a child or adult being harmed, you can also contact the police or Tower Hamlets Council directly.

Children and young people

Children and young people can complain too. They can tell any coach, ask a parent or carer to complain for them, or contact an independent organisation such as Childline on 0800 1111. We will listen, take it seriously and explain what we have done in a way they can understand.

Confidentiality, records and learning

Complaints are treated confidentially and shared only with those who need to know. Anonymous complaints will be considered, although it may be harder to respond fully. We keep a record of every complaint, the outcome and any action taken, review them regularly and use them to improve our services.

If you are still not satisfied

If you are not happy after the final review, you may be able to take the matter to an appropriate external body, such as Tower Hamlets Council (where we work in partnership with it), the police for criminal matters, or the Information Commissioner's Office for data protection complaints.