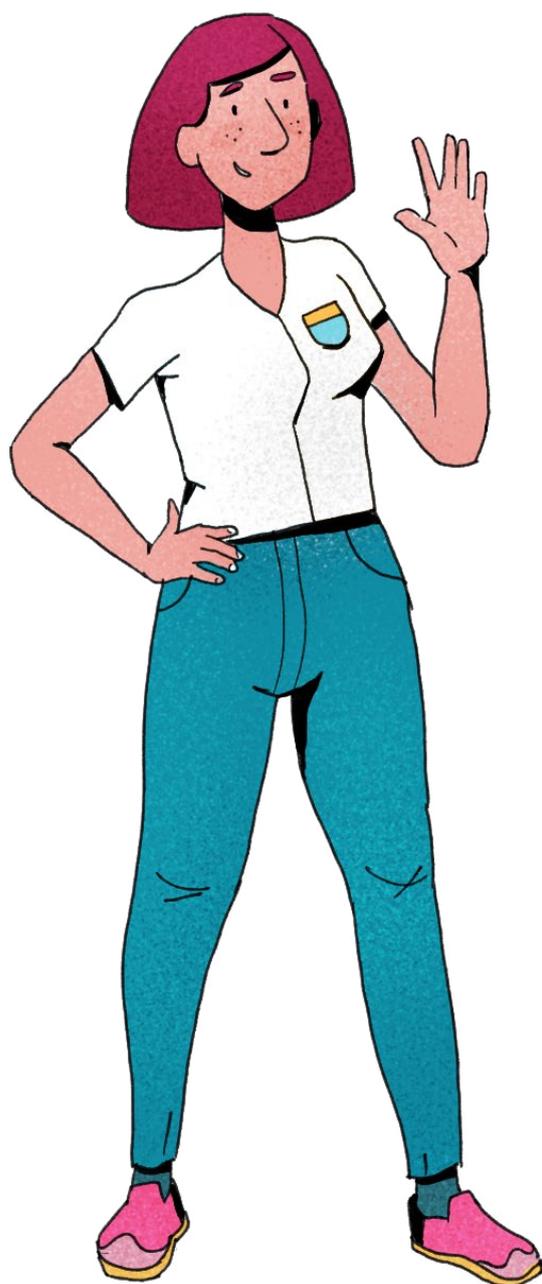




2.3 Guidance note: Role and responsibilities of child safeguarding focal point



The role of the child safeguarding focal point is critical to an environment where children of all ages and abilities can safely participate in football and have fun. However, this does not mean that the focal point has sole responsibility for the safeguarding of children within an organisation. The role of the focal point, as the name suggests, is to provide a point of contact, and to advise, support and assist the organisation in the implementation of the child safeguarding policy and associated procedures, including responding to cases. To be able to do this, the focal point needs the support of management and the cooperation of all those working with and for the organisation.

Although the role of the child safeguarding focal point is important, it need not be too onerous. There will be times, such as when an incident occurs, when there will be additional work, but most of the time the role involves being available to support and assist as required. Ideally, organisations should nominate at least two people to act as focal points, so that the workload can be shared and if one is absent there is another to fulfil the role.

Organisations should ensure that the name and contact details of the focal point are made known to all those working with and for the organisation, as well as parents and children.

Suggested roles and responsibilities of the child safeguarding focal point

- Acting as the focal point (first point of contact) and taking the lead on child safeguarding within the organisation;
- Ensuring safeguarding training is given to staff, volunteers and others;
- Ensuring staff and others are aware of the child safeguarding policy and their responsibilities under it, for example by providing training and briefings;
- Advising and supporting staff, volunteers and partners in the implementation of the child safeguarding policy;
- Carrying out risk assessments, or supporting others in completing them, when required;
- Ensuring that football programmes, practices and activities take constant and regular account of safeguarding measures;
- Mapping out and establishing partnerships with local authorities and civil society organisations with expertise in child welfare, health and law enforcement, so that information is available if an incident occurs or external advice is needed;
- Ensuring staff, volunteers and all stakeholders, as well as children and parents, are familiar with the child safeguarding policy, and that the policy is accessible;
- Acting as the first point of contact if incidents of abuse arise, and escalating concerns to management and local authorities, including law enforcement, as appropriate;
- Participating in child safeguarding training, as required;
- Keeping an accurate record of any incidents;
- Maintaining the safeguarding implementation plan and producing an annual progress report, as requested;
- Advising and representing the organisation in matters relating to safeguarding.

Suggested skills and characteristics

- Prepared to take on the role of child safeguarding focal point;
- Ideally, some knowledge and experience in child safeguarding and child protection;
- Willing to undertake child safeguarding training;
- Respect and authority within the organisation, so that their opinions are valued;
- Approachable, with good communication skills with adults and children;
- Ability to keep calm when a concern is raised, especially if a child needs assistance;
- Ability to empathise with children and to ensure that their needs and interests remain the focus of all actions and decisions (child-centred approach);
- Ability to work with others to ensure that the child safeguarding policy, and asso-



ciated procedures, are implemented in general and when a child protection incidence occurs;

- Commitment to the values of football, safeguarding children and upholding their rights, together with the ability to advocate for and defend safeguarding;
- Training and presentation skills;
- Ability to keep records, e.g. of training, incidents;
- Ability to work professionally, confidentially and consistently in an area where emotionally distressing and sensitive issues and cases may arise.