

SWO October 2025 Newsletter

Hi all, and welcome to the October SOGB Safeguarding Newsletter. We have lots to catch up on, with new staff, new updates, and changes to some key safeguarding and welfare info so let's dive in.

I will start this month's newsletter with some good news, the SOGB Safeguarding Team have recruited a new member of staff. Anna Nash has joined the team as the Safeguarding Support officer, and will be working three days a week. Her role covers anything from general safeguarding advice and guidance, incident triage, DBS checks, resource development and much more.

Anna has been part of SOGB for over 30 years taking on various volunteer roles, such as the Club SWO, and a Club Main Contact amongst others. Anna has also supported SOGB at World and National games and brings with her a great wealth of experience and knowledge in the safeguarding world. We are so happy to have Anna on board and would like you all to join us in a huge welcome!

From the Inbox

In the "From the Inbox" section we explore some of your questions and queries we've had over the last two months. If you're asking, it's very likely someone else is wondering and will also want to know the answers to the questions, so we thought it best to share them and the learnings and developments that come from them with you here.

DBS/PVG

We have had a few DBS related queries in over the past couple of months, and thought it best to share with you what we'd covered and provide a little more info on frequently asked DBS questions:

Q. Can I use a DBS from another organisation at SOGB?

A. Yes but there are certain requirements that must be met. The guidance from DBS states that in order to transfer a DBS from one organisation to another the following must be adhered to:

1. The DBS Certificate must be registered on the update service
2. The role on the certificate must match the role the person is applying for (e.g. Coach or Teacher)
3. The workforce on the certificate must be the same as the workforce the person will be working with (Child, Adult, or Child and Adult)
4. The original Certificate must be seen by the Safeguarding and Welfare officer and/or SOGB Safeguarding Team
5. You have consent from the person to run a check on the DBS update service

With this criteria met, SOGB can accept DBS certificates from other organisations.

A link to all things DBS Update Service can be found [HERE](#)

Q. How long does a DBS last?

A. DBS certificates only holds information on the person and any convictions up until the date they are issued. Most organisations, including SOGB require all staff and volunteers who are eligible to have a DBS check to have one every three years.

SOGB strongly advise that all staff and volunteers who have a DBS, register with the DBS update service. This is free for volunteers, and negates the issues of re-applying and potentially missing the three year mark which could result in a temporary restriction on activities pending a new check.

For info on DBS application and update service registration check out the SOGB Step-by-Step Guides hatto support volunteers through the process, these can be found [HERE](#) along with lots of other info on DBS.

Q. What happens if there is a conviction on my DBS, will that mean I cannot volunteer?

A. A conviction on a DBS does not automatically mean that a person will be barred from volunteering. SOGB have developed an [Adverse DBS Disclosure Process](#) which outlines the process that is undertaken when we receive a DBS with content.

The content will be reviewed, and dependent on several factors including the nature of the offence, severity, demographic of victim (if applicable), and time since offending an outcome will be determined. The information may also be escalated to a full Incident Management Group Meeting for discussion and a decision, or may just be reviewed by the Safeguarding Lead and Director of Operations.

Possible outcomes are:

- Deployment without restriction
- Deployment with restriction (such as a risk management agreement)
- Refusal to deploy into role

If you have any queries about any above, please contact safeguarding@sogb.org.uk and the team would be happy to discuss.

INTERNAL UPDATES

Safeguarding Strategy Consultation

There is only 9 days left for you to feed into the Safeguarding Strategy.

The Safeguarding Strategy is essentially the roadmap for SOGB's plans for Safeguarding, Safety, Welfare and Wellbeing over the next three years. When implemented and embedded the plans with are designed to ensure that athletes are not only protected, but also that they are supported to live happier, healthier lives. Everyone has a part to play in ensuring athlete are given safe and positive experiences at SOGB and this strategy will support that.

If you want to be involved in the consultation of this document which will shape the next few years of safeguarding, safety, welfare and wellbeing at SOGB, please email me at adam.leathwood@sogb.org.uk and I will add you to the distribution list.

Safer Recruitment DBS/PVG

We have recently updated several of the DBS guidance documents to ensure that the latest guidance from DBS is captured, but also to streamline internal processes and make sure you have all you need to move through the DBS application process as smoothly as possible.

We have made a few tweaks to the [List of Roles that Require a DBS](#) which includes DBS portability (moving DBS certificates between organisations) and how to apply for a PVG check (Scottish DBS equivalent).

The [DBS Step-by-Step Guidance](#) has been updated and now includes guidance on what to do when you receive your certificate, this is especially important for SWO's/Main Contacts as they are involved in this process. We have also included clearer guidance and links to relevant update service processes within the document.

Framework Audits

The SOGB safeguarding team have now submitted their framework audit to the Child Protection in Sport Unit. This has been a lengthy process evidencing all that we do to keep children safe at SOGB, your hard work has been integral in providing key pieces of evidence for this, so a huge thank you from the team for all that you do.

Engagement with the framework audit is a mandatory requirement for us to receive vital Sport England funding. We should get a full report from them in the next few weeks which we will share with you.

With the CPSU framework submitted, it is now time to complete the Ann Craft Trust framework audit. This is similar to the CPSU one but focuses on Adult Safeguarding processes. It is again, a lengthy process and one that is also mandatory to qualify for Sport England funding. We will keep you posted on progress.

Upcoming Projects

Athlete to Volunteer Transition

The Safeguarding Team are working with the Athlete Leadership Team to put together a transition program for Athletes who wish to take on volunteering roles at SOGB. Whether it be general support, coaching or other, the program aims to upskill Athletes and inform them of key

information and differences when changing roles. Things such as safeguarding training, qualifications, differences in Codes of Conduct, and boundaries are all included. The course is in its infancy, but is an exciting project and we look forward to bringing you more news on it soon.

Policy and Procedure Update

Online Safety/Social Media

Earlier this month we reviewed and updated our Online Safety and Social Media Guidance (previously our Social Media Policy).

This is now much more extensive and explores many online safety themes and issues, how to recognise them, how to respond to them and how to keep athletes and yourselves safe in an online environment.

We have seen an increase in concerns of an online nature impacting our athletes, so it's important you understand the risks and responses so that you can act quickly to support athletes who may be at risk.

Check out the new guidance [HERE](#)

SOGB Event Volunteer Safeguarding Brief

The Event Safeguarding briefing has had a revamp to ensure that the latest in best practice is included and to provide you space to put event specific details in. The Safeguarding briefing is a short 14 page presentation that can either be delivered at an event to attendees, or distributed prior to the event taking place. It informs event volunteers of key safeguarding information and how to raise concerns. Check out the presentation [HERE](#)

SOGB Safeguarding Number

Just a reminder that the SOGB Safeguarding support line has been updated, the new number is: **07383 389663** and is operational Mon-Fri 9-5. SOGB does not have an out of hours Safeguarding line. In the event of an incident that occurs out of hours, please ensure you follow steps to ensure the safety of all in the immediate, take action to refer to local authority or police where necessary and then pass this information onto the SOGB Safeguarding Team via our reporting form found [HERE](#)

External Updates

CPSU

Why Parental Engagement Matters in Youth Sport

Earlier this month was Keeping Your Child Safe in Sport Week, the CPSU ran webinars, podcasts and highlighted positive stories in line with the theme. One of those focused on why parental engagement matters in youth sport, and dived into modelling values, managing expectations and much more. To find out more about this, click [HERE](#)

To see what else the CPSU has to offer as part of the Keeping Your Child Safe in Sport Week, click [HERE](#)

Ann Craft Trust

The Ann Craft Trust is ramping up for the Safeguarding Adults Week in November, and is already releasing resources and information about what the week will bring. Similarly to the NSPCC, the Ann Craft Trust will be running events, webinars, podcasts and presentations. There are also a bunch of resources you can use to promote the week and adult safeguarding practices.

All information about Safeguarding Adults Week can be found [HERE](#)

Policy/Procedure Snippet

Online Safety and Social Media Guidance

The SOGB Online Safety and Social Media Policy has had an extensive update, so we thought it best to cover some of them here.

Section 3 of the document explores some of the **known online risks**, how they work, and how to keep safe from them. The section covers grooming, catfishing, scams, cyberbullying, radicalisation and more.

We will be building on some of these themes with upcoming athlete resources, engagement tools and social media posts. You can use the information in this section to have discussions with athletes in your club setting, and to ensure you hold a good level of knowledge of current online risk and can provide advice and guidance when speaking to athletes about their online lives.

Section 8 talks about personal online relationships in the context of SOGB, and explores some guidance that is designed to keep staff, volunteers and athletes safe. It explores appropriate communication and connections, and also provides guidance on new connections that will help keep communication transparent, and safe for all.

Check out the full guidance [HERE](#)

Time to Listen Course

Time to Listen Course

If you are a new SWO, or if you have not yet completed the 'Time to Listen' training course, SOGB may be able to help you access the course.

Having this training or an equivalent is vital in ensuring you are sufficiently trained and skilled to perform the role of SWO at Special Olympics.

Having an appropriately trained SWO at every club will soon be a requirement of accreditation, so make sure you get yourself on this training or an equivalent course as soon as possible.

SOGB can provide funding for you to complete this course, so get in touch if you need it.

There are plenty of online classrooms delivering the Time to Listen course, you can check these out [HERE](#)

If this training is something you're interested in completing and would like to discuss this further, please email me at adam.leathwood@sogb.org.uk

As always we love hearing from you, whether it be safeguarding ideas, good news stories, an update on what you have been up to and any new your ideas and initiatives you are working on. If you want to chat, give feedback or share some news then feel free to drop us an email or pick up the phone anytime Mon-Fri 9-5.

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