



RLSS UK
Safeguarding

RLSS UK Good Practice Guidance

Author: Lee Heard and Richard Flavell supported by Safe LTD

Date: 31 July 2023

File Name: RLSS UK Good Practice Guidance

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| Lee Heard | Charity Director | Charity |  | 12/04/2023 |

Version History

| Version | Amendment/Reason | Date |
|-------------|----------------------------|------------|
| v1.0 | Initial document | 12/04/2023 |
| V1.1 | Amendment to contents list | 31/07/2023 |
| | | |

Associated Documents

| Document | Version |
|---|---------|
| RLSS UK Adult at Risk Safeguarding Policy and Procedures | V1.0 |
| RLSS UK Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures | V1.0 |

Review dates

This document should be reviewed in line with the details in section 12 and updated to reflect relevant changes.



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1.0 Policy statement

- 1.1 RLSS UK is committed to ensuring that children and adults at risk who participate in its activities including lifesaving, lifeguarding, community awards, education, sports, competitions and any other events have a safe, positive and enjoyable experience. All groups of people whatever their age, gender, language, disability, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, socio-economic status and culture have the right to protection from abuse and to be treated fairly. Everyone involved with an adult who may be at risk is uniquely placed to recognise and respond to abuse and poor practice across RLSS UK.
- 1.2 This document details specific good practice guidance and should be read in conjunction with the Child and Adult Protection and Safeguarding Policies.

2.0 Guidance on staff/volunteer ratios

- 2.1 The staff/volunteer: participant ratios can be found section 2.4.
- 2.2 Children under the age of 18 must be supervised at all times and cannot be included in the staffing/supervision ratios. If the activity is mixed gender, male and female staff/volunteer should be available. Consideration needs to be given to the following:
 - Gender, age and ability of the children and adults at risk
 - Participants special needs, medical requirements or with disabilities
 - The degree of risk of activity being undertaken
 - Greater need for supervision
 - The competence and likely behaviour of participants
 - The duration of a journey
 - Children's growing independence
 - Children's need for privacy
 - The geography of the facility being used
 - The risk assessment
 - The need for the ratio to be increased for participants, depending on the above factors and considerations
- 2.3 If there is an accident or an incident involving a child or adult at risk or member of staff/volunteer, you should ensure that there are enough people remaining to supervise the group safely. Staff/volunteers should not work in isolation and there should be at least a minimum of two staff/volunteers present at every session or activity.



2.4 RLSS UK recognises and firmly recommends the staff/participant ratios below:

- Lifesavers with disabilities: 8:1
- Non-swimmers and beginners: 12:1
- Improving lifesavers, mixed ability groups, competent swimmers: 20:1
- Competitive lifesavers: 30:1

For additional guidance please refer to the RLSS UK Code of Practice and RLSS UK Award Guidance Syllabus relevant to the award/training/assessment. The relevant RLSS UL Guidance and syllabus will also detail the correct qualifications that are needed to teach/ assess the specific award.

3.0 Guidance on changing rooms and showers

3.1 The following guidance advises clubs and affiliated bodies on the best practice when using shared facilities by adults, children and adults at risk:

- Where the facilities are used by both adults and children at the same time there must be access to separate changing, showering and toilet areas.
- Adult staff/ volunteers must not shower at the same time as children and adults at risk using the same facilities.
- For mixed gender activities, separate facilities must be available for males and females. Note: Where there are mixed facilities on site action must be taken to ensure that separate areas are designated for males and females.
- When children or adults at risk use changing rooms, they should be supervised by two members of staff/volunteers.
- If a child or adult at risk feels uncomfortable changing or showering in public, then no pressure should be placed on them to do so. Instead, they should be encouraged to do so at home.
- If children or adults at risk with disabilities use your club, make sure they and their parents /carers are involved in deciding how they should be assisted. Always ensure that the person consents to the assistance that is offered.
- The use of mobile phones and/or photographic equipment by **ANYONE is not** allowed within areas where children and adults at risk are changing or showering.
- Everyone participating in club activities will be asked to read this Policy and its procedures, guidelines and codes of conduct which will be made available to the club and on the RLSS UK website.
- A copy of these guidelines will be displayed in changing facilities. Staff and volunteers are asked to adhere to these guidelines.



3.2 Many public and private facilities have their own policy regarding the use of changing rooms and showering areas to which a club may have to adhere as part of a facilities usage agreement. The facility policy should form part of your club's operating procedures.

4.0 Guidance on treatment

- No child or adult at risk should be treated in a situation where they are on their own in a treatment room with the door closed.
- All treatment procedures should be 'open' i.e. the door remains open, parents/carers are invited to observe treatment procedures.
- If treating an area of the body which is potentially embarrassing (i.e. the groin) a suitable consenting adult acting as a chaperone **MUST** be present.
- It is important to maintain medical confidentiality and patient dignity at all times.
- Prior to medical treatment being carried out on a child or adult at risk a parent /carer should complete a [PARENTAL CONSENT FORM](#) in written form where appropriate. All treatment procedures must be fully explained to the child or adult at risk and verbal consent is given before they are carried out.

5.0. Guidance on dealing with injuries and illness

- 5.1 RLSS UK Club coaches should ensure that they are aware of all allergies and underlying medical conditions for all children and adults at risk who are taking part in RLSS UK activities. It will be the responsibility of the parents, guardians and carers to ensure that such medical conditions are made known to staff and volunteers and that medication is available if appropriate.
- 5.2 Clubs, and other bodies affiliated to RLSS UK should have guidelines and an [INCIDENT REPORT FORM](#) available to download completed for any injuries children or adults at risk sustain during activities (clubs often use those provided by the facility where they operate from). [A WITNESS REPORT FORM](#) should be completed by any person who has witnessed an accident or incident.
- 5.3 Where volunteers witness an injury the parents/carers must be told as soon as possible. If the child or adult at risk needs medical attention you must arrange this immediately and inform the parents/carers as soon as possible. Always ensure that contact details are up-to-date during activities for e.g. lifesaving, lifeguarding, competition, sports or any other events and information about any relevant medical conditions for children or adult at risk in your care.
- 5.3 When dealing with any emergency (medical or otherwise) always ensure that other staff/volunteers are being supervised by appropriately qualified colleagues.



6.0 Guidance on transport

6.1 It is the responsibility of the club and its management to ensure that when they travel either on hired or self-driven transport with children and/or adults at risk:

- The driver has undergone an advanced criminal records check.
- The driver has a vehicle which is fit for purpose i.e. suitable for the team if it includes disabled participants, ensure it is roadworthy and passed its MOT and adequately insured.
- The driver has an appropriate and valid driving license.
- All drivers should operate to the driving regulations and driving laws of the land in which they are operating.
- All vehicles have seat belts and should meet current safety regulations.
- All passengers should have a seat and ensure that regulations are adhered to.
- Trips should be planned allowing sufficient time for breaks and additional drivers should be available to meet driving regulations.
- The transport does not carry more than the permitted number of passengers.

6.2. Planning and managing transport

6.3 Staff, volunteers or event organisers should not transport children or adults at risk on journeys in any vehicle alone. If all alternatives have been exhausted and where the individual has no other option but to transport a child or adult at risk alone, there are several safety measures that should be put in place to minimise the risk. They should:

- Inform parents/ carers of the person who will be transporting the individual, the reasons why and how long the journey will take, method of transport, costs, competition details etc.
- Ensure there is adequate staff ratios to provide supervision during transportation. This will depend on the nature of the activity, the age of the participants and any special needs of the group.
- Ensure that a person other than the planned driver talks to the child or adult at risk about transport arrangements to check they are comfortable about the plans.
- Clearly state time for start and end of activities, sessions or competitions.
- Clearly state times of pick-up and drop off.
- Ensure that when dropping participants off after an event or training session, staff/volunteers alternate which child or adult at risk is dropped off last.
- Ideally two children or adults at risk would be dropped off at an agreed point i.e. one of their family homes so that no child or adult at risk is alone with a staff or volunteer.
- Ensure that children and adults at risk are aware of their rights and they have someone to turn to or report any concerns they may have. If a culture of safety is created within your club, then the child or adult at risk is more likely to talk to another person if they are feeling uncomfortable about a situation.
- Ensure that staff, club members, volunteers, event organisers leading or coordinating activities remain in pairs in the company of other parents/carers until all participants have been collected.
- Keep attendance records and record of any incidents or injuries that arise.



6.4 Alternative transport arrangements

- Children or adults at risk should never be allowed to travel alone except in special circumstances when appropriate arrangements can be made with their parents or carers, travel companies and airlines concerned.
- Parents/carers can make travel arrangements for their child or adult at risk to and from an activity including national events, but it is their responsibility to ensure their arrangements are both safe and appropriate. However, club officials or event organisers should provide them with the necessary information to enable them to do this successfully. Parents/carers are responsible for obtaining maps/directions, details, start and finish times of the activity and the responsible person for the event and guidance associated with this should be provided.
- Parents/carers are responsible for their child/adult at risk and should ensure that the participant is correctly signed in and out not just dropped off in the car park.
- Staff, volunteers, club officials, event organisers, are not liable or responsible for any private transportation arrangements provided by or organised by parents /carers with other family members, friends, third parties or even other club members in connection with getting their child or adult at risk to and from club activities including national events, competitions or overnight awaytrips.
- It is the responsibility of parents/carers to check that appropriate and up to date insurances and licensing documentation is held by the owner and/or driver of the vehicle.

Parents, guardians and carers should be clearly briefed each year about their obligations to provide transportation to and from RLSS UK activities.

7.0 Guidance on away events/overnight stays

7.1 Travelling away is a regular event for many clubs. Trips may vary from short journeys across town to train journeys at a new venue or to competitions or may involve more complicated arrangements involving overnight stays. But even what may appear as the most straightforward of trips will require some level of planning. Written permission of parents/ carers must be obtained for all overnight away trips, a [PARENTAL CONSENT FORM](#) is available to download.

7.2 It is essential that those accompanying children or adults at risk to away events or training camps, and the participants themselves, have a clear understanding of their responsibilities and the conduct expected of them. All trips must have an accountable club officer, volunteer or event organiser who will have the overall responsibility to lead and manage the event. Communication with all parties is a key issue when planning any journeys: -

- Parents/ carers must inform the club official/event organiser at the outset of any medical condition or special needs of their child or adult at risk. Details of any medication and its administration should be clearly identified to the club official or event organiser before departure.
- Parents/ carers should also have the name and contact details of the relevant staff/volunteer/event organiser in the event of an emergency.



- Participants should be aware of the travel plans, cost, competition details, kit requirements, venue and time for collection and any other details.
- Participants should be made aware of the Codes of Conduct and requirements to behave accordingly.
- Staff, volunteers should not share rooms with children or adults at risk.
- Children or adults at risk should share rooms with those of the same age and gender.
- Adults (staff and volunteers) should work in pairs and knock before entering rooms.
- All group interactions and socialisation should take place in communal areas (i.e. no boys in girls' rooms and vice versa).
- Children and adults at risk should be under reasonable supervision at all times and should never leave the venue or go unsupervised without prior permission.
- Staff/volunteers/event organisers need to be made aware of what their responsibilities are in advance of the trip. They should pay particular attention to participants' behaviour while on public transport.
- If the trip is a long journey, it is important that staff, volunteers or event organisers have an itinerary and each other's contact and emergency details.
- Staff, volunteers, club officials or event organisers should ensure that they have a list of all the participants, with the relevant contact names and address, copies of parental consent forms and emergency contact numbers.
- Those engaged in overnight stays must have an enhanced DBS check.
- Suitable risk assessments should be carried out prior to any event taking place.
- **A nominated Club DSL and their contact details will be required to be 'on call' for each event.**

8.0 Guidance on parental consent

- 8.1 The Club or event organiser should ensure that written permission is gained from parents /carers for their children or adults at risk to participate in any of the activities, games, competitions or practice sessions run by the club, other bodies or organisations. A timetable/programme of activities should be provided at the beginning of each programme. Parents/carers should be notified of any changes to this timetable in writing.

9.0 Guidance on late collection

- 9.1 Late collection of children or adults at risk by parents/carers presents clubs, staff, volunteers or event organisers with a potentially difficult situation. Staff and volunteers must make it clear to all parents/guardians at induction and throughout the year that it is **NOT** the club's or event organiser's (including staff/volunteers/club officials) responsibility to transport children or adults at risk home on behalf of parents/carers who have been delayed.
- 9.2 When organising activities and events staff/volunteer/event organisers must ensure that relevant contact numbers (for example Club DSL) are pre circulated and an instruction is given to parents/ guardians to phone if there is any likelihood of late collection.
- 9.3 Parents/ Guardians should be asked to provide an alternative contact name or number, for staff/volunteers/event organisers to use when they are not available on their usual number.



9.4 In cases of late collection, staff/volunteers:

Should:

- Attempt to contact the parents /carers of the child or adult at risk on their contact number.
- Use the alternative contact name/number if necessary.
- Wait with the child or adult at risk at the facility, with other staff/volunteers or parents/ carers present if at all possible.
- Remind parents/ carers of the policy relating to late collection.

Should not:

- Take the child or adult at risk home or to any other location.
- Send the child or adult at risk home with another person without permission from a parent/ carer.
- Ask the child or adult at risk to wait in a vehicle or facility with you alone.

10.0 Guidance on missing/lost person

10.1 It is important to remember that most children are found within a few minutes of disappearance. However, as a general rule where a child or adult at risk is reported missing there should be a maximum of 20 minutes before the Police are called. **Where there are immediate concerns or where the circumstances highlight that there is a high risk of harm to the missing individual through their vulnerability then the Police should be called immediately.**

10.2 In those circumstances where the child remains missing [A MISSING/LOST PERSON FORM](#) must be completed and returned to the Club DSL or the Event Organisers.

10.3 The following guidance should be followed in relation to a child or adult at risk going missing:

- Ensure other children or adults at risk in your care are supervised appropriately while a search is being conducted for the missing person concerned.
- Organise members of staff/volunteers and/or other adults to conduct a search of the surrounding area to help locate the missing person and ask them to report back within a short amount of time at a specified location to a single point of contact.
- Inform the parents/ carers of the missing child or adult at risk and reassure them that appropriate actions are being taken.
- Use all other means available at the site e.g. information points, radio and alert systems to search for the missing person.
- Document a physical description of the missing person including their hair and eye colour, approximate height and build and clothing they are wearing and instructions of what to do if the person is found i.e. take the child or adult at risk to the Lost Child/ Information Point.
- Record the circumstances in which the child or adult at risk has gone missing and where he/she was last seen.
- Report the concern to the Police if the search is unsuccessful no later than 20 minutes



after the initial missing person report if the search is not complete.

- If the Police action your report, follow their advice and requests for progressing the search.
- Follow recommended guidance from the Police and maintain contact with them.
- Inform the Club DSL/ club management or RLSS UK HQ DSL of the incident.
- As soon as the missing child or adult at risk is located ensure that this is communicated to all individuals involved in the search including their parents/carers, searchers and police. Complete a [FOUND PERSON FORM](#) available to download here.

11.0 Managing challenging behaviour

11.1 Staff, volunteers, children, adults at risk and their parents /carers should be included in the identification of 'what is and is not acceptable behaviour' and what actions may be implemented to deal with unacceptable behaviour. A Code of Conduct should be included in the welcome pack for the club and all members (new and existing) will be required to agree to it and be reminded periodically about the Code of Conduct.

11.1 The response to challenging behaviour should always be proportionate to the actions. Intervention should take place at the earliest opportunity to prevent escalation and should be fully explained to the child or adult at risk and their parents /carers. The following options for intervention should be considered:

- Time out - from the activity, group or individual work.
- Reparation - the act or process of making amends.
- Restitution - the act of giving something back.
- Behavioral reinforcement - rewards for good behaviour, consequences for negative behaviour.
- Use of individual 'contracts' or agreements for their future or continued participation.
- Temporary or permanent exclusion.
- De-escalation of the situation - talking it through with the person involved.
- Increased supervision by staff/volunteers.
- Seeking additional and/or specialist support through working in partnership with other agencies to ensure their needs are met appropriately by:-
 - making a referral for support to Local Authority, Children's Services or Adult Services
 - discussing with their Key Support Worker if they have one
 - discussing management strategies with the person involved
 - working collaboratively with other professional agencies

Always seek parental/ carer consent unless the child or adult at risk is felt to be 'at risk' or 'in need of protection' from their parents/carers.

11.2 The following should never be permitted as a means of managing the behaviour of a child or an adult at risk:

- Verbal intimidation, ridicule, humiliation or physical punishment or the threat of such.
- Refusal to speak to or interact with the child.
- Being deprived of food, water, toilets or other essential facilities.



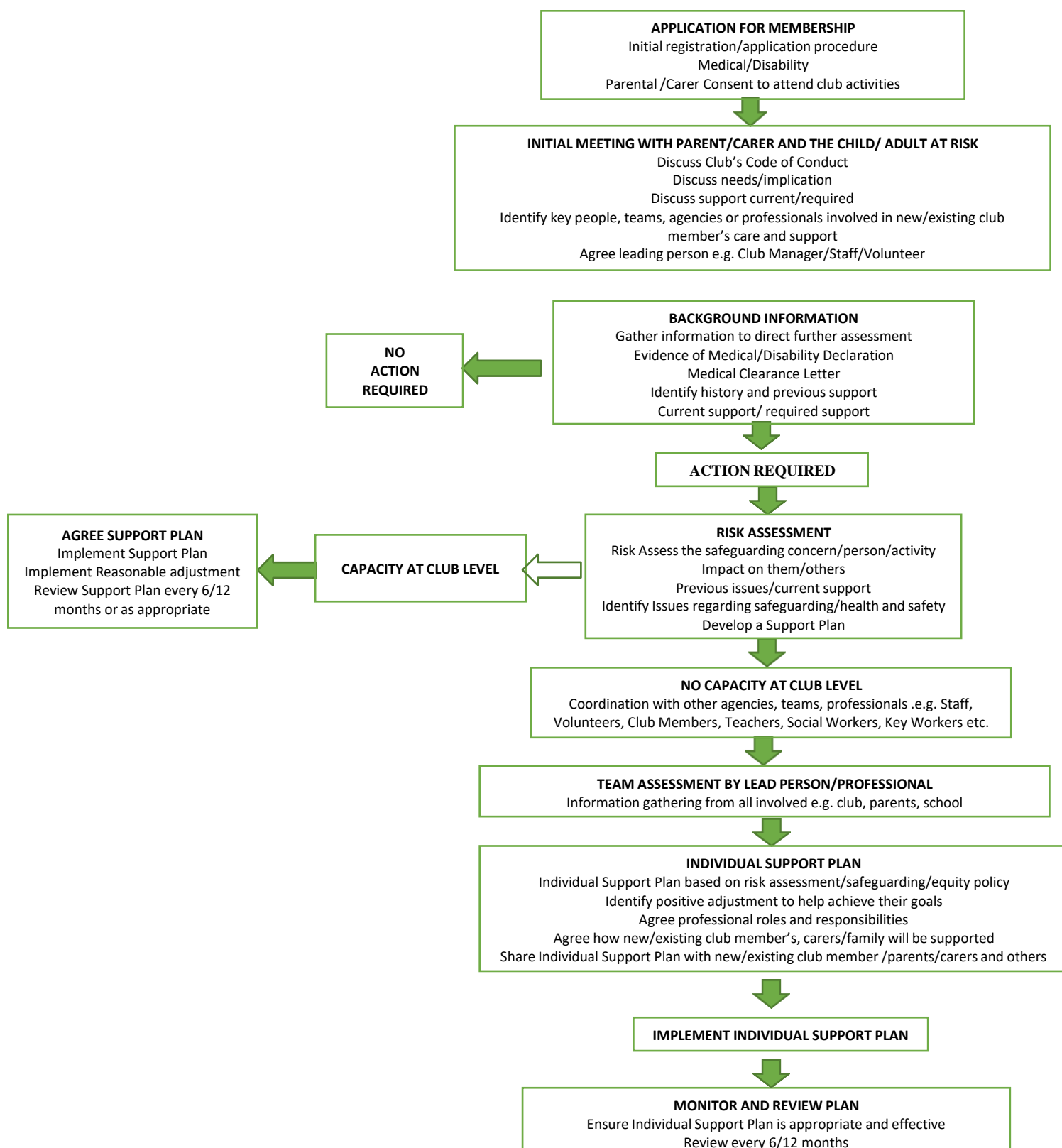
- 11.3 Staff, volunteers or event organisers should review the needs of any child or adult at risk for whom sanctions are frequently necessary. This review should involve the child or adult at risk and their parents /carers and in some cases other professionals involved in supporting or providing services to ensure an informed decision is made about the future or continued participation of the child or adult at risk. All such cases should be brought to the attention of the Club/ Branch DSL.
- 11.4 As a last resort, if a child or an adult at risk continues to present a high level of risk or danger to him or herself, or others, he or she may have to be suspended or barred from the group, club activities or event. It should be noted however that children and adults at risk with behavioral challenges should be excluded from participating in the activities of RLSS UK only in exceptional cases.

12.0 Procedural implementation and review

- 12.1 These procedures were implemented on 1st May 2023 and will be reviewed on an annual basis or in response to changes in safeguarding legislation and/or best practice.



Flow Chart 3: Managing Challenging Behaviour



Note: For an activity or event use an [ACTIVITY RISK ASSESSMENT FORM](#)

For a safeguarding incident or assessment use a [SAFEGUARDING RISK ASSESSMENT FORM](#)



Appendix A – Definitions

Definition of a disability

According to the Equality Act 2010, a person has a disability ‘if they have a physical or mental impairment, and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’. The definition includes people with hidden disabilities (such as diabetes, heart condition, epilepsy, mental health, challenging behaviour).

- **Impairment** means physical or mental impairments; this includes learning disabilities, sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing.
- **Substantial** means more than minor or trivial. For example, it takes much longer than it usually would to complete a daily task such as getting dressed.
- **Long-term** means 12 months or more. For example, a breathing condition that develops as a result of a lung infection.

Reasonable adjustment

A reasonable adjustment is any action which is taken arising out of the legal obligation set out in the Equality Act 2010 to overcome a disadvantage that is experienced by a person as a result of having a disability or medical condition.

The aim or reasonable adjustment is to ensure that, as far as is reasonable, a new or existing member with a disability or medical condition has the same access as a non-disabled club member. This may mean removal of physical barriers and/or providing additional support for club members who have a disability or medical condition.

Individual support plan

The development of the Individual Support Plan (ISP) is a written person-centred planning process setting out the details of the support, activities and resources agreed by the club member/their parents/carers and a team of professionals involved in their care to achieve and maintain personal outcomes to facilitate their participation in the Club’s activities.

Team assessment

This is a team of professionals who are involved in the care and support of the individual. These include:

- The club member, family members including parents/carers /friends
- GP, Consultants, Educational Psychologist, Specialist Teacher
- Club Staff/Volunteers, support workers, advocates, Social Workers etc.

Risk assessment

A risk assessment is ‘simply a careful examination of what (in your club setting), could cause harm to people and to weigh up whether you have taken enough precaution or should do more to prevent harm’. This enables the club to determine how likely this is to happen, so that it can determine those things, situations, process that may cause risk to club members.



Once the risks are identified the club must decide what measures to take in order to minimise or control the risk from occurring. Risk assessments can be carried out in five steps (for a detailed guidance refer to HSE website at: www.hse.gov.uk/fivesteps.htm).

1. Identify the risks (what, in the club setting, could cause harm to people)
2. Decide who might be harmed and how.
3. Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions
4. Record the findings and act on them by identifying sensible measures in your club
5. Review the assessment and update if necessary