

Elite Development Coaching (ED Coaching LTD)

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

(Aligned with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026)

1. Introduction

Elite Development Coaching / ED Coaching LTD is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people. We recognise our statutory, moral and professional responsibility to protect children from harm and to provide a safe, inclusive and child-centred environment across all activities.

Safeguarding is embedded throughout every aspect of our organisation and is everyone's responsibility. We aim to ensure that all children and young people engaging in our activities are able to do so safely, confidently and enjoyably.

All children and young people have an equal right to protection from abuse, regardless of any protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

All adults working for or on behalf of Elite Development Coaching, in any capacity, have a duty of care to safeguard children and young people. Adults working with children are in positions of trust and are expected to uphold the highest standards of behaviour, professionalism and ethical conduct at all times.

2. Safeguarding Culture

Elite Development Coaching adopts a **child-centred and whole-organisation approach** to safeguarding, in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026*.

We promote a culture where:

- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility
 - Children's voices are listened to and taken seriously
 - Concerns are raised early and acted upon
 - Professional curiosity is encouraged
 - Poor practice and low-level concerns are challenged
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3. Statutory Framework and Guidance

This policy is informed by and complies with the following legislation and guidance:

- Children Act 1989 and 2004
 - Children and Social Work Act 2017
 - Education Act 2002 (where activities take place in schools)
 - Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
 - Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
 - FA Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures
 - FA Charter Standard Safeguarding Requirements
 - Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
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4. Scope

This policy applies to all individuals working for or on behalf of Elite Development Coaching, including directors, employees, casual staff, volunteers, contractors and agency staff.

All requirements within this policy are mandatory.

5. Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)

Elite Development Coaching has a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) with lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection.

The DSO will:

- Hold appropriate safeguarding training in line with KCSIE 2026
 - Act as the main point of contact for safeguarding concerns
 - Liaise with schools, Local Authorities, the LADO, police and statutory agencies
 - Manage safeguarding records and information sharing
 - Oversee allegations and low-level concerns
 - Promote safeguarding awareness and best practice
 - Ensure children's voices are heard and acted upon
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6. Locations and Activities

This policy applies across all Elite Development Coaching activities, including training sessions, matches, holiday camps, after-school clubs and events delivered at training venues and school sites.

7. Safer Recruitment

Elite Development Coaching follows safer recruitment practices in line with KCSIE 2026 and FA Responsible Recruitment guidance.

This includes:

- Clear safeguarding statements in adverts and role descriptions
 - Written applications and face-to-face interviews
 - Exploration of safeguarding attitudes and behaviours
 - Verification of identity, qualifications and experience
 - Scrutiny of employment gaps
 - Appropriate DBS checks
 - Two written references, including safeguarding-related enquiries
 - Ongoing monitoring of suitability
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8. DBS and Criminal Records

All staff engaged in regulated activity must hold a valid Enhanced DBS check.

Where information is disclosed, a safeguarding risk assessment will be completed. Decisions will be proportionate, lawful and focused on the safety and welfare of children.

9. Induction and Training

All staff and volunteers receive safeguarding training during induction and refresher training at least every three years.

Training includes:

- Recognising abuse and neglect
- Child-on-child abuse

- Online safety
- Radicalisation and Prevent
- Responding to disclosures
- Reporting procedures
- Professional boundaries and positions of trust

The DSO undertakes safeguarding updates annually.

10. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Safeguarding practice is inclusive, culturally sensitive and responsive to individual needs. All children are treated with dignity, fairness and respect.

11. Types of Abuse

Abuse may include, but is not limited to:

- Physical abuse
 - Emotional abuse
 - Sexual abuse
 - Neglect
 - Child sexual exploitation
 - Child-on-child abuse
 - Online abuse
 - Female genital mutilation
 - Radicalisation
 - Youth-produced sexual imagery
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12. Children with Additional Vulnerabilities

Some children may be more vulnerable to abuse, including those:

- With disabilities
- Who are young carers

- Who have a social worker
- Experiencing domestic abuse
- At risk of exploitation or radicalisation
- Who are looked after or previously looked after
- Who frequently go missing

Additional safeguards will be implemented where required.

13. Online Safety

Safeguarding extends to online environments. Staff remain alert to online grooming, exploitation, inappropriate content and misuse of digital platforms.

All online safety concerns are reported and managed in line with this policy.

14. Low-Level Concerns

In line with KCSIE 2026, low-level concerns about adults working with children must be reported to the DSO.

Low-level concerns will be:

- Recorded confidentially
 - Reviewed to identify patterns
 - Managed proportionately
 - Used to improve practice and safeguarding culture
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15. Professional Conduct

Staff must maintain professional boundaries and adhere to always expected standards of behaviour. Poor practice will be challenged and addressed.

16. Use of Mobile Phones and Personal Devices

Elite Development Coaching recognises the importance of maintaining professional boundaries, reducing distractions and ensuring effective supervision to safeguard all children and young people.

The use of personal mobile phones and smart devices by staff, volunteers and coaches is prohibited during sessions, except for the following permitted purposes:

- Recording attendance and completing registers
- Contacting emergency services
- Responding to urgent safeguarding or welfare concerns
- Essential operational communication authorised by management

Mobile phones and personal devices must not be used for:

- Taking photographs or videos of children
- Social media activity
- Personal calls, messaging or internet use
- Any purpose that detracts from active supervision

All photography or filming must be conducted using approved devices only and in line with Elite Development Coaching's Photography and Social Media procedures, with appropriate parental consent in place.

When not in permitted use, mobile phones must be stored safely and discreetly. Any misuse of mobile phones or personal devices may be treated as a safeguarding concern and managed in accordance with this policy, including through the low-level concerns or allegations procedures where appropriate.

17. Collection, Dismissal and Handover Procedures

Elite Development Coaching recognises that the safe collection and handover of children is a critical safeguarding responsibility. Staff must ensure that every child is accounted for and safely transferred to an appropriate responsible adult before leaving the site.

The following procedures must be always adhered to:

Supervision and Accountability

- All children remain under the supervision of coaching staff until they are formally collected or handed over.
- An accurate register must be maintained, and staff must ensure all children are accounted for before dismissal and prior to leaving the site.

- At no point should a child be left unsupervised or allowed to leave the activity area without staff knowledge and supervision.
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Collection by Parents/Carers

- Children must only be released to a known parent/carer or an individual authorised in advance.
 - In the event of an unauthorised individual arriving to collect a child, the known parent/carer must be contacted directly. Collection will only be permitted once explicit confirmation has been received from the parent/carer, preferably in writing (e.g. text or email), confirming the name of the authorised individual.
 - Staff must remain at the designated collection point until all children have been safely collected.
 - Open or uncontrolled dismissal (e.g. children leaving independently without confirmation) is not permitted unless explicitly agreed in writing with parents and the school.
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Handover to Third Parties (e.g. After-School Clubs)

- Where children are attending another provision (e.g. after-school club), a clear, recorded handover must take place between coaching staff and the receiving provider.
 - Verbal confirmation and a visual transfer of responsibility must occur; children must not be instructed to make their own way between provisions.
 - Where no collection or handover has taken place, the child remains the responsibility of Elite Development Coaching staff.
 - If there is no prior written confirmation regarding alternative collection arrangements, parents/carers must be contacted, and the child must not be dismissed until appropriate confirmation has been received.
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Split Groups and Movement Around Site

- Where movement around the site is required (e.g. collecting bikes), this must take place only after formal handover to a parent/carer or supervising adult.
- At least one coach must always remain at the main collection point and maintain an accurate record of all children as they are collected.

- Staff must communicate effectively to ensure all children are accounted for across any split groups or locations.
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Uncollected Children

- If a child is not collected at the expected time, staff must:
 - Keep the child under continuous supervision
 - Attempt to contact parents/carers using emergency contact details
 - Inform the school or venue staff where applicable
 - Under no circumstances should staff leave a child unattended or leave the site until the child has been safely handed over.
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End of Session Responsibility

- The lead coach is responsible for completing a final headcount and confirming, via the attendance register, that all children have been safely collected or handed over.
 - Staff must not leave the site until this process has been completed in full.
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Failure to follow these procedures will be treated as a safeguarding concern and may result in disciplinary action.

18. Photography and Social Media

Parental consent is required for photography and filming.

Staff must not connect with children on personal social media accounts.

19. Information Sharing

Information is shared lawfully, proportionately and in line with statutory guidance, GDPR and safeguarding requirements.

20. Recording and Retention

Safeguarding records are kept securely and confidentially.

- Child protection records are retained until the child reaches 25
 - Records relating to adults are retained in line with KCSIE guidance
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21. Allegations Against Adults

All allegations are managed in accordance with **Part Four of KCSIE 2026**.

Where required, concerns will be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day.

22. Child-on-Child Abuse

All children involved will be considered at risk and supported appropriately. Risk assessments will inform decisions regarding ongoing participation.

23. Supporting Staff

Support will be provided to staff and volunteers involved in safeguarding concerns or investigations.

24. Empowering Children

Children are encouraged to express their views, opinions and concerns. Their voices are central to our safeguarding approach.

25. Mental Health and Wellbeing

Elite Development Coaching is committed to promoting positive mental wellbeing for all participants and staff.

26. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, following safeguarding incidents, or when legislation or statutory guidance changes.

27. Safeguarding Reporting Flow (Escalation Procedure)

Elite Development Coaching adopts a clear and immediate safeguarding reporting structure to ensure all concerns are acted upon without delay.

Where a safeguarding concern is identified by any member of staff, the following process must be followed:

- The concern must be recorded and, where appropriate, immediate steps taken to ensure the child's safety
- If a child is in immediate danger, staff must contact emergency services without delay
- The concern must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) on the same day
- The DSO will securely record the concern in line with safeguarding recording procedures
- The DSO will determine appropriate escalation, which may include referral to:
 - School Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
 - Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within 1 working day (where allegations against adults are made)
 - Children's Social Care / MASH team
 - NSPCC or other safeguarding agencies where appropriate

A clear safeguarding reporting flowchart may be issued separately for staff training and operational use.

28. Staff Code of Conduct (Professional Standards)

All staff, coaches and volunteers are required to maintain the highest standards of professional behaviour at all times.

Staff must adhere to the following expectations:

- One-to-one situations with children should be avoided wherever possible unless a clear risk assessment has been completed
- Physical contact is only permitted where it is:
 - necessary for safety, or
 - appropriate for coaching correction, and must always be minimal, professional, and explained

- All communication must be age-appropriate, professional and free from discriminatory or inappropriate language
 - Staff must not form exclusive, favouritist or inappropriate relationships with children
 - All staff have a duty to challenge and report inappropriate behaviour from colleagues
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29. Risk Assessments (Activity and Environment Safety)

Elite Development Coaching is committed to ensuring all activities are delivered safely.

The following risk assessments are mandatory:

- Session-specific risk assessments completed prior to delivery
 - Venue and site risk assessments for all locations including schools, 3G pitches and camps
 - Dynamic risk assessments carried out during sessions where conditions change
 - Equipment safety checks completed prior to each use
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30. Staff-Child Ratios and Supervision Standards

Elite Development Coaching ensures appropriate supervision levels at all times.

- Minimum staffing ratios will be maintained in line with age group and activity type
 - A qualified lead coach must be present for each group
 - Lone working with children is not permitted unless explicitly risk assessed and approved
 - Supervision must be maintained during transitions, toilet breaks, split groups and movement across sites
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31. First Aid and Medical Emergencies

Elite Development Coaching ensures appropriate medical provision at all times.

- At least one qualified first aider will be present at all sessions
- Medical and emergency contact information will be collected at registration

- Staff will be informed of relevant medical conditions, including asthma, allergies and medication requirements
 - Emergency medication (e.g. inhalers, EpiPens) must be accessible where required
 - All injuries, accidents and near misses must be recorded and reported appropriately
 - Parents/carers will be contacted following any significant injury or medical incident
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32. Behaviour Management and Positive Discipline

Elite Development Coaching promotes a positive and supportive environment for all children.

- Positive reinforcement strategies must be used at all times
 - Shouting, humiliation, intimidation or degrading language is strictly prohibited
 - Physical intervention will only be used in exceptional circumstances where there is an immediate risk of harm
 - Behaviour concerns must be recorded and escalated where necessary for repeated or serious incidents
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33. Transport and Travel Safety

Where transport or movement between venues is required:

- Children must never be transported alone in staff vehicles
 - Written parental consent must be obtained prior to any transport arrangements
 - All travel must be supervised and appropriately risk assessed
 - Clear sign-in and sign-out procedures must be followed at all transport points and venues
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34. Site Security and Visitor Management

Elite Development Coaching ensures secure and controlled environments for all sessions.

- All visitors must sign in and out at the designated point

- Regular visitors must hold appropriate DBS clearance where required
 - No unauthorised access to coaching sessions is permitted
 - Children must always remain within designated safe zones
 - Staff must be aware of emergency procedures including lockdown and evacuation protocols
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35. Digital Communications and Messaging

Elite Development Coaching maintains strict controls on digital communication.

- Staff must not communicate with children via private messaging platforms (including WhatsApp, Snapchat, Instagram or similar)
 - All communication must take place through approved organisational channels
 - Parents/carers must be included in communication where appropriate
 - Any group messaging must be admin-controlled, monitored and professional in nature
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36. Contextual Safeguarding

Elite Development Coaching recognises that safeguarding risks may occur outside of coaching environments.

Staff are required to remain alert to risks including:

- Peer group influences
- Community-based risks
- Transport routes and travel between activities
- Online or digital environments

Staff must report any patterns of concern, not only isolated incidents.

37. Safeguarding Concern Recording Standards

All safeguarding records must be accurate, secure and compliant with data protection requirements.

Records must:

- Be factual, dated and timed
- Clearly distinguish opinion from fact where applicable
- Include the child's exact words where relevant
- Be stored securely with restricted access
- Be maintained in chronological order where individual safeguarding files are required

38. Whistleblowing Protection

Elite Development Coaching is committed to openness and accountability.

- Staff may escalate concerns outside of the organisation where necessary
- No staff member will suffer detriment or retaliation for raising a safeguarding concern in good faith
- External reporting routes, including the NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline, are fully supported and protected

39. Safeguarding Induction Checklist

All staff and volunteers must complete a structured safeguarding induction process prior to working with children.

This includes:

- Confirmation that all safeguarding policies have been read and understood
- Completion of KCSIE safeguarding briefing
- Signed staff code of conduct
- Verified DBS clearance (where applicable)
- Understanding of reporting procedures
- Completion of scenario-based safeguarding training or assessment

40. Key Contacts

- **Director of Operations & Designated Safeguarding Officer**
Ben Godfrey
07585 229692
info@elitedevelopmentcoaching.co.uk

- **NSPCC Helpline**
0808 800 5000
help@nspcc.org.uk
- **The FA Safeguarding Team**
safeguarding@thefa.com
- **Whistleblowing**
- Elite Development Coaching encourages openness and transparency.
- Concerns can be raised internally or via the NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline:
0800 028 0285