



Safeguarding Policy - 2025

Policy Statement

Empire is committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children, young people, and adults at risk. We recognize that their safety and well-being are paramount and that every individual has the right to protection. We have a duty of care for everyone in our programs and will strive to provide a secure and nurturing environment for all participants.

At Empire, safeguarding is a shared responsibility. This includes, but is not limited to, officials, coaches, volunteers, parents, guardians, carers, family members, and skaters. We are dedicated to fostering a safe, positive atmosphere and promoting an open culture where concerns can be raised without fear of retaliation or judgment.

All coaches, volunteers, and safeguarding officers must hold the appropriate licenses – DBS, Safeguarding and First Aid.

Empire expects all members, affiliated clubs, and academies to implement safeguarding policies that align with the Empire safeguarding framework when delivering activities to children, young people, and adults at risk.

This policy has been approved by the clubs committee and will be reviewed and updated annually to reflect changes in legislation or statutory guidance.

We will also ensure the dissemination of this policy to all relevant parties, including coaches, volunteers, committee, children, young people, adults at risk, their parents, guardians, carers, families, and external stakeholders such as partners and sponsors.

Equal Opportunities Statement

Empire is committed to promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion within all aspects of its operations. We recognize that everyone has the right to participate in our activities without fear of discrimination, harassment, or victimization. This includes protection against discrimination based on the following grounds:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex

- Sexual orientation

We do not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment, or victimization. Any comments or actions that contribute to such behaviour will be challenged. All incidents will be recorded and, when necessary and appropriate, shared with parents, guardians, carers, and relevant external agencies.

Empire is committed to:

- Treating everyone with dignity and respect, celebrating their individual achievements.
- Ensuring safer recruitment processes for all individuals involved in the sport of roller skating.
- Addressing concerns and allegations swiftly and appropriately.

Policy Aim

Empire aims to implement the highest standards of safeguarding throughout all its activities with children, young people, adults at risk, and their families. Our goal is to provide a safe, welcoming environment where everyone's achievements are recognized and celebrated. We expect all members and affiliated clubs to work in line with this safeguarding policy, ensuring that best practices are always followed.

We will achieve this by adhering to our safeguarding policy, guidelines, and risk assessments. Empire Skating holds current Public Liability Insurance to cover all activities related to the club.

Empire Skating Safeguarding and Committee Team

The Empire head coaches, committee and parents hold overall responsibility for the safeguarding of children, young people, and adults at risk in the sport of roller skating. We ensure that the welfare and best interests of participants are central to all decision-making processes.

To help oversee and implement this safeguarding policy, Empire has appointed a dedicated Safeguarding Officer. Their primary role is to ensure that safeguarding policies, are fully enacted, and that Empire Skating adheres to best practice standards in safeguarding.

The responsibilities of the Safeguarding Officer include:

- Supporting and advising the Club in implementing effective safeguarding policies and safer recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers.
- Monitoring safeguarding concerns and managing risks across the sport by reviewing safeguarding statistics and addressing any allegations or concerns about the behaviour of responsible adults.
- Referring any serious concerns to Social Care Services, the Local Authority Designated Officer, and/or the police, as required, without delay.
- Liaising with external agencies when appropriate.
- Staying informed about the latest developments and best practices in safeguarding within sport.

- Ensuring that the safeguarding policy is reviewed and updated as needed for all affiliated clubs and academies.

The Safeguarding officer at Empire Skating club is Committee member, **Dan Noble** – safeguarding@empireskating.club

Staff Ratios to Children, Young People, and Adults at Risk

Empire ensures that there is always a minimum of one responsible and DBS/Safeguarding/First Aid adult present during any activities of a ratio coach to student 1:6 and two responsible adults for ratio 2:12 etc.

For any one-on-one coaching sessions involving athletes under the age of 18, a second responsible adult must always be present alongside the coach. This ensures that both the athlete's and the coach's safety are upheld.

Young People who Work in our Organisation

Empire includes all young people who are undertaking coaching or volunteer work within the club in this policy. Their safeguarding is of the utmost importance and will be treated with the same care and attention as any other young person involved in our activities. This policy applies to young volunteers or athletes contributing to Empire at any level.

Safeguarding Code of Conduct

Empire aims to create a safe and inclusive environment where all members, regardless of age, ability, or background, are treated with respect and dignity. All club and academy staff, volunteers, and members are expected to uphold the following standards:

- Treat all children, young people, and adults at risk with respect and dignity.
- Always prioritize their welfare and safety.
- Maintain professional boundaries, both in person and when using technology.
- Listen to individuals and respect their wishes and feelings.
- Address inappropriate behaviour such as bullying, swearing, and disruption in a professional manner.
- Respect the developmental stage and needs of each athlete, avoiding excessive training or competition.
- Offer positive feedback and constructive criticism to motivate and encourage athletes.
- Communicate openly with parents, guardians, and carers.
- Only use physical contact with students when necessary, for example, to prevent harm.
- Avoid being alone with children, young people, and adults at risk, where possible.
- Act on any disclosures, allegations, or concerns of abuse immediately.
- Participate in approved safeguarding training at appropriate levels.
- Ensure restraint is used only in emergency situations, to prevent harm, and that it is reported to the Safeguarding Lead.
- Always follow Empire's safeguarding policy.
- Ensure all activities are engaging, enjoyable, and conducted in a safe environment.

Recognizing Abuse in Children, Young People, and Adults at Risk

It is crucial for all staff, coaches, and volunteers to be aware of various signs of abuse, though the following list is not exhaustive. Always remain vigilant, listen attentively, and document any concerns.

Signs of potential abuse include:

- Alcohol and substance misuse
- Breast ironing
- Carrying offensive weapons
- Child criminal and sexual exploitation, including County Lines
- Concealed pregnancy
- Domestic violence, including “honor-based” abuse
- Emotional or psychological abuse
- Exploitive use of technology
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Financial or material abuse
- Gang involvement or criminal exploitation
- Peer-on-peer abuse, including sexual violence and upskirting
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Online safety risks
- Radicalization
- Sexual, physical, or spiritual abuse
- Self-neglect
- Trafficking

Handling Disclosures and Allegations

In the event of a disclosure or allegation made by a child, young person, or adult at risk, Empire staff, coaches, and volunteers must follow these steps:

- Take all disclosures seriously and listen carefully to what is said.
- Stay calm and offer reassurance, making sure the individual feels safe.
- Limit questions to avoid leading or investigative inquiries.
- Clearly explain the next steps and that information may need to be shared with others (e.g. social care services, the police).
- Act immediately to report any concerns.

Carefully document what is said or observed and ensure that the report is signed, dated, and passed to the Safeguarding Lead or relevant authorities.

In the case of an emergency, dial 999 immediately without hesitation.

Bullying and Harassment

Empire has zero tolerance for bullying, harassment, and any form of abusive behaviour.

Bullying can manifest in physical or emotional forms, including but not limited to:

- Physical violence, threats, and verbal taunts
- Verbal abuse, gossip, or rumours
- Malicious behaviours via social media or electronic communication

Such behaviour may stem from prejudice against groups (e.g. race, religion, gender, or disability). All incidents will be treated as safeguarding concerns when directed at children, young people, and adults at risk.

Empire will:

- Foster a culture of respect and equality, with zero tolerance for bullying or harassment.
- Report and investigate all incidents, taking appropriate action to stop any bullying behaviour.
- Record all incidents, including witness statements, with actions taken documented clearly.

Photography & Filming Guidance

Empire acknowledges the importance of photography and filming to capture achievements, inspire participants, record routines for learning purposes, and celebrate milestones. However, it is vital to ensure that photography is done responsibly, especially given the potential misuse of images online.

For personal use at Empire Skating events, such as competitions and training, it is important for participants, parents, and spectators to understand the risks.

- Photographs should be taken only in appropriate locations, avoiding changing areas, and respecting participants' privacy.
- Always ensure that photos are taken in an open environment with consent from those involved.
- When photographing young athletes, consent from their parents or guardians should be obtained.

When Empire or affiliated clubs use images for promotional purposes:

- Consent from parents/guardians must be sought before any image is used.
- Images should focus on the activity and present participants in a positive light.
- Professional photographers should be registered and monitored to ensure compliance with these guidelines.

Transport

Empire requires that written permission be obtained from parents, guardians, or carers before transporting children, young people, or adults at risk to any event, practice, or activity without their parent or guardian present. This ensures transparency and that appropriate safeguards are in place.

Late Pick-Up of a Child, Young Person, or Adult at Risk

If a child, young person, or adult at risk is not picked up on time from a training session or event, the following procedures should be followed:

- Attempt to contact the parent, guardian, or nominated emergency contact.
- The supervising adult should remain with the child or young person, ideally with other staff, volunteers, or parents for support.
- If all attempts to make contact fail, the situation may require contacting Social Care Services or the Police for guidance and support.

First Aid

To ensure the safety and well-being of all participants, Empire ensures:

- **Trained First Aiders:** All first aiders are required to have completed recognized first aid training, as per Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidelines, and hold valid certificates.
- **First Aid Responsibilities:** First aiders are responsible for administering immediate first aid, ensuring that medical help (ambulance, etc.) is called when needed, and recording all incidents in First Aid and Incident Accident Books.
- **Coaches:** All coaches must hold a valid First Aid Certificate, updated as necessary in line with GB Skate Coaching Licence requirements.
- **First Aid Cover:** There will always be a trained first aider present on-site during events or training sessions, and if external venues are used, they must provide appropriate first aid cover.

GBSA Recommendations

It is essential that all individuals involved in activities with Empire remain vigilant about safeguarding and continue to assess and mitigate risks in their work and activities.

- **Annual Risk Assessments:** The GBSA Safeguarding Team will conduct annual assessments, but all individuals are responsible for bringing any concerns about safeguarding practices or procedures to attention.
- **Robust Safeguarding Practices:** Safeguarding is a shared responsibility, and it is through the adoption of strong policies that everyone can feel confident in the safety and protection of children, young people, and adults at risk.

Policy Date

This safeguarding policy was agreed and disseminated on 20th January 2025

Policy Review Date

The policy will be reviewed annually or whenever there are substantial organizational changes. The next review will take place on 20th January 2026.