



Safeguarding Policy - 2026

Policy Statement

Empire is committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children, young people, and adults at risk. We recognise 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 involved in our programmes and activities and will strive to provide a secure, inclusive, and nurturing environment for all participants.

Safeguarding at Empire is a shared responsibility. This includes, but is not limited to, officials, coaches, volunteers, committee members, parents, guardians, carers, family members, and skaters. Empire is dedicated to fostering a safe, positive environment and promoting an open culture where concerns can be raised, reported, and addressed without fear of retaliation, judgement, or discrimination.

All coaches, volunteers, and safeguarding officers must hold appropriate and up-to-date qualifications, including DBS checks, safeguarding training, and first aid certification.

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 club committee and is reviewed annually to reflect changes in legislation, statutory guidance, and best practice.

The policy will be shared with all relevant parties, including coaches, volunteers, committee members, children, young people, adults at risk, parents, guardians, carers, families, and external stakeholders such as partners and sponsors.

Equal Opportunities Statement

Empire is committed to promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion across all areas of its work.

Everyone has the right to participate in Empire activities without fear of discrimination, harassment, or victimisation.

Empire does not tolerate discrimination on the grounds of:

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

Any discriminatory behaviour, harassment, or victimisation will be challenged and addressed promptly. Incidents will be recorded and, where appropriate, shared with parents, guardians, carers, and relevant external agencies.

Empire is committed to:

- Treating everyone with dignity and respect
- Ensuring safer recruitment practices
- Responding to concerns and allegations swiftly and appropriately

Policy Aim

Empire aims to implement the highest standards of safeguarding across all activities involving children, young people, adults at risk, and their families. We seek to create a safe, welcoming environment where everyone's welfare is prioritised and achievements are celebrated.

This will be achieved through adherence to this safeguarding policy, associated procedures, and risk assessments. Empire Skating holds current Public Liability Insurance covering all club-related activities.

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 oversee and implement safeguarding arrangements, Empire has appointed:

- A Safeguarding Lead / Welfare Officer
- A Safeguarding Support Member

Named Safeguarding Officers

- Safeguarding Lead: Helen Stuart
- Safeguarding Support Member: Dan Noble
- Safeguarding Email: safeguarding@empireskating.club

Both safeguarding officers:

- Have full access to the safeguarding email account
- Are members of a secure, restricted-access safeguarding WhatsApp group
- Are appropriately trained and DBS checked

Clear Safeguarding Responsibilities

The Safeguarding Lead is responsible for:

- Acting as the primary point of contact for safeguarding concerns
- Receiving, recording, and managing disclosures and allegations
- Making referrals to Social Care Services, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), GB Skate, and/or the Police where required
- Liaising with external agencies as appropriate

- Providing safeguarding advice and guidance to members, parents, coaches, and volunteers
- Ensuring safeguarding training, DBS checks, and safer recruitment processes are maintained
- Reviewing and updating the safeguarding policy annually

Safeguarding Support Member Responsibilities

- The Safeguarding Support Member supports the Safeguarding Lead by:
- Assisting with the management and recording of safeguarding concerns
- Acting as a deputy safeguarding contact when the Safeguarding Lead is unavailable
- Supporting communication and continuity of safeguarding processes

Safeguarding Cover When the Safeguarding Lead Is Unavailable

Empire ensures safeguarding cover is always available.

- If the Safeguarding Lead is unavailable, the Safeguarding Support Member will assume responsibility for managing safeguarding concerns.
- If both safeguarding officers are unavailable, concerns must be reported via the safeguarding email address, which is monitored by both officers.
- In an emergency or where there is immediate risk of harm, individuals must contact the Police (999) or Social Care Services without delay.

No safeguarding concern should ever be delayed due to uncertainty around availability.

Safe Reporting and Confidentiality

Empire maintains clear, confidential, and accessible safeguarding reporting systems.

Safeguarding concerns may be reported:

- Directly to the Safeguarding Lead or Safeguarding Support Member
- Via the safeguarding email address
- Verbally or in writing by children, young people, adults at risk, parents, volunteers, or staff

All safeguarding concerns:

- Are taken seriously
- Are recorded accurately and stored securely
- Are shared strictly on a need-to-know basis
- Will be managed in line with data protection requirements

Empire encourages an open safeguarding culture and ensures individuals who raise concerns are supported and protected from victimisation.

Staff Ratios

Empire always ensures appropriate supervision. Minimum ratios are:

- 1 coach to 6 participants
- 2 responsible adults for up to 12 participants
- For one-to-one coaching involving anyone under 18, a second responsible adult must always be present.

Young People Working or Volunteering at Empire

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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.

Recognising Abuse in Children, Young People, and Adults

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

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 and Filming

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

Written parental consent must be obtained before transporting children, young people, or adults at risk without a parent or guardian present.

Late Collection

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.

Policy Date

This safeguarding policy was reviewed and approved on 20 January 2026.

Policy Review Date

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Next review date: 20 January 2027