# Poor Practice Threshold Guidance for Clubs

**Poor practice is a behaviour which falls below the standard required by a club as set out in their code of conduct. Whilst the behaviour may not be immediately dangerous or intentionally harmful it does set a poor example and if it were to continue, it might lead to harm or put a child in danger. To allow poor practice to continue unchallenged may result in an environment developing in which abuse may be able to take place. It normalises behaviour which is unacceptable and should not be condoned. It may also lead to other people having suspicions about an individual's motivations, even if there was no intention to harm.**

**Club codes of conduct should reflect best practice by stating clearly the good behaviour which the club wishes to promote; they should not list the poor practice prohibited but set out the positive behaviour which is expected. Codes of conduct should reflect club expectations of members' behaviour and should be cross-referenced with the club disciplinary processes. The codes of conduct should also make clear the rights which volunteers have; for example, access to training, support in reporting concerns or poor practice and fair and equitable treatment by the club.**

**Codes of conduct should be written for coaches, match officials, parents, spectators, players and club members, they should be pertinent to the activities these different groups of individuals will be involved in within the club.**

**Set out below are examples of Low-Level Poor Practice, High-Level Poor Practice and Safeguarding scenarios and when you would be expected to involve LFA DSO and also outside organisations.**

**Low level poor practice** – would be expected to be dealt with by the CWO through the clubs disciplinary processes . These include reports/complaints in regard to instances such as:

- The condition of the field of play or training areas.
- Players arguing/bullying amongst themselves in the team (unless it is demonstrated at a fixture)
- Coaches disagreements with others (unless demonstrated in front of children)
- Coaches having favourites and not treating all children fairly and equitably.

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**High Level poor practice** – would be expected to be reported to your league and LFA DSO.

- Coaches shouting at players/referee
- Parents behaviour at fixtures and training (shouting, arguing, fighting) especially if it is towards a child or the referee
- Referees conduct towards players
- When a coach has been formally reported three times to the club for low level poor practice to the club.

**Safeguarding** – This needs to be reported directly to the County FA DSO and if a child, young person or adult at risk (AAR) is in immediate danger it must be reported to the police straight away.

- An adult is contacting an u18 through social media privately
- An adult's behaviour is threatening and abusive towards a child, young person AAR
- An adult is bullying a child, young person or AAR
- An adult has been identified as a risk by another organisation
- An adult is known to be under investigation for safeguarding reasons by the local authority or police.

The above lists are not exhaustive ones, but it should give you an idea of the type of behaviour which constitutes the different behaviours.

If you are in any doubt about a concern/report you are dealing with then please do not hesitate to contact the LFA DSO on 07973 666778 or sarah.pridmore@lincolnshirefa.com