

Lesson 14: Coaching Ethics and Safeguarding

EBCS Level 2 CPD – Advanced Technical Coaching

Learning Objectives (for the coach)

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Apply core ethical principles in coaching (fairness, respect, integrity).
- Understand safeguarding responsibilities for juniors and vulnerable adults.
- Recognise and respond to potential safeguarding concerns.
- Maintain professional boundaries in coach-player relationships.
- Promote a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment for bowls.

Background (why this matters)

Ethics and safeguarding are central to responsible coaching. A coach's role extends beyond skill development to protecting the welfare of all participants. Effective coaches:

- Act with honesty, fairness, and respect.
- Create environments free from discrimination, abuse, or harm.
- Understand safeguarding procedures and reporting channels.
- Uphold clear boundaries to avoid conflicts of interest or inappropriate relationships.
- Model behaviours that promote trust and integrity in bowls.

Practical Activities

Ethics Scenarios (Discussion or Role-Play):

- Scenario 1: A coach gives more attention to stronger players, neglecting beginners—how should this be addressed?
- Scenario 2: A coach uses negative comments after mistakes—what's the ethical response?
- Scenario 3: A coach is asked to bend competition rules slightly to favour their team—how should they act?

Safeguarding Case Studies:

- Case 1: A junior player reports feeling uncomfortable with an adult member's behaviour. What steps should be taken?
- Case 2: A vulnerable adult appears withdrawn and anxious during sessions. What should the coach do?
- Case 3: A parent insists their child plays despite visible injury. How should the coach respond?

Drills and Practices:

- Code of Conduct Review: Coaches and players review EBCS codes together.
- Boundary Role-Play: Practise appropriate coach-player interactions.
- Safeguarding Flowchart Exercise: Map out steps from concern to reporting.

Questioning Prompts

- 'Was this decision fair to all players?'
- 'How can I ensure my language and behaviour remain respectful?'
- 'What boundaries must I keep as a coach?'

Website: <https://lawnbowlscoaching.uk>

© 2025 Lawn Bowls Coaching. All rights reserved.



Berkshire Bowls Coaching Scheme



- 'How would I act if I had a safeguarding concern?'
- 'How do I model integrity in competition settings?'

Coach Notes (ethics, inclusivity, safety)

- Always place player welfare above performance outcomes.
- Follow safeguarding policies and reporting protocols.
- Be aware of power dynamics—coaches must not exploit trust.
- Include safeguarding education in player and parent briefings.
- Promote inclusivity by ensuring all participants feel safe and respected.

Reflection (self + peer)

Coach self-reflection:

- Did I act fairly and respectfully in all interactions?
- Am I confident in recognising and reporting safeguarding issues?
- Do I maintain clear professional boundaries?
- How do I balance competition demands with ethical behaviour?

Peer feedback:

- 'I observed you promote fairness by... (specific). This created... (evidence). You could also... (suggestion).'

Player homework:

- Review the club's safeguarding policy.
- Write one example of respectful behaviour you saw this week.
- Suggest one idea to make training safer or more inclusive.

Outcomes (what you should achieve)

- Ability to apply ethical principles in coaching decisions.
- Confidence in safeguarding knowledge and procedures.
- Clear understanding of professional boundaries.
- Skills to model fairness, respect, and integrity in all settings.
- Commitment to promoting a safe and inclusive bowls environment.

Appendix A – Glossary of Coaching Terms

Safeguarding: The process of protecting children and vulnerable adults from harm or abuse.

Code of Conduct: A set of rules outlining expected behaviours for coaches, players, and officials.

Professional Boundaries: Limits that protect the relationship between coach and player from becoming inappropriate.

Ethical Dilemma: A situation where a coach must choose between competing values or pressures.

Reporting Protocol: The official steps to follow when raising a safeguarding concern.

