
Programmes for Children & Young People: Safeguarding Support Toolkit

This toolkit is intended to help ensure that children and young people engaged in all funded programme activities (including *Sportivate*) are effectively safeguarded by:

- a) identifying and supporting the implementation of safeguarding measures that all deliverers are required to have in place
- b) clarifying the safeguarding roles and responsibilities of all organisation involved in the commissioning or delivery of activities (County Sport Partnerships (CSPs), other commissioning bodies and activity deliverers), with reference to the safeguarding criteria
- c) providing guidance, tools, examples and templates to support the development, implementation and review of safeguarding practice by activity providers that reflect the needs of the organisation
- d) assisting activity providers to move from the minimum safeguarding standards towards excellence
- e) providing good practice examples of ways in which CSPs are working with and monitoring partners to ensure the application of the safeguarding criteria at delivery level
- f) complementing the High Quality Community Sport for Young People publication

*CSPs, their partners and activity providers can access the toolkit online. The toolkit is supported by a number of examples of policies, procedures, information and good practice which are **links** throughout the document.*

The toolkit will be updated to respond to the needs of users, who will be encouraged to submit examples of best practice. The Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) will administer the online toolkit and upload additional documents and materials.

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Section 1:

Background information

1.1. Programmes for children and young people: Safeguarding Support Toolkit

For whom is the toolkit intended?

The Safeguarding Toolkit is a resource intended to support the work of all those involved in *Sportivate* or other programmes for children and young people – from CSPs with a strategic role and other organisations or groups responsible for identifying, commissioning and monitoring potential activity providers, to individuals and organisations delivering those activities to children and young people.

What is the purpose of the Safeguarding Toolkit?

The toolkit has been designed to support all organisations involved in programmes by:

- identifying and supporting the implementation of safeguarding measures that deliverers are required to have in place
- clarifying the safeguarding roles and responsibilities of all organisation involved in the commissioning or delivery of activities (CSPs, other commissioning bodies and activity deliverers), with reference to the safeguarding criteria
- providing guidance, tools, examples and templates to support the development, implementation and review of safeguarding practice by activity providers that reflect the needs of the organisation
- assisting activity providers to move from the minimum safeguarding standards towards excellence
- providing good practice examples of ways in which CSPs are working with and monitoring partners to ensure the application of the safeguarding criteria at delivery level
- complementing the High Quality Community Sport for Young People publication

What does the toolkit contain?

The Toolkit provides strategic and operational information and is split into four sections:

Section 1 provides background information on safeguarding and introduces the mandatory safeguarding standards for activity providers.

Section 2 covers the role and responsibilities of the CSPs and other partners in terms of ensuring minimum standards for safeguarding are in place. Information is provided on the variety of organisations that provide activities and their varying support needs.

Section 3 covers the six safeguarding criteria in detail. It is designed to support the activity provider to develop safeguarding policy and practices that meet the needs of their organisation and provides guidance to assist with the preparation and/or review of safeguarding policy and practice.

Section 4 contains examples of child protection policies, procedures and good practice guidance, many of which have been provided by CSPs. Additional information relevant to *Sportivate* is provided or signposted as well as important contact details.

How do I use the Safeguarding Toolkit?

Where an organisation has been identified as needing to undertake work in specific areas in order to meet the criteria, the toolkit provides resources and signposting information to assist in this process and build on existing practice.

The toolkit is designed to provide both an understanding of the importance of key safeguarding considerations and practical resources that organisations can promote or adapt.

Section 2 of the toolkit clarifies the safeguarding responsibilities for CSPs and their partners. Section 3 is designed to support the activity providers to meet the required minimum safeguarding standards by taking an approach that fits with their organisation and activity. Activity providers are given the tools to review their own safeguarding practices to identify areas where action is required. Organisations are encouraged to go through a process of developing or reviewing their own policy and procedures. The templates can be adapted by organisations without existing guidelines or used to review existing policy and procedures to identify any gaps or areas that require updating.

1.2. Introduction to safeguarding

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined in the HM Government guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2010) as the process of:

- protecting children (anyone under the age of eighteen) from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's health and development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Enabling those children to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully.

This wider remit of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is a shift away from the narrower focus on protecting specific children who are suffering, or are at risk of suffering, significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect. The shift followed the publication in 2003 of the Government Green Paper 'Every Child Matters', which was presented alongside the government's formal response to the report into the death of Victoria Climbié. The Children Act 2004 provides the legal framework to enact the recommendations contained in Every Child Matters.

The protection of young people under the age of 18 from abuse (physical, emotional, sexual abuse and neglect) remains a focal point. In addition, it is vital to protect young people from bullying. The impact and consequences of abuse and bullying occur not just at the time but can continue into adult life often in the form of damaging psychological problems. Research carried out by the NSPCC found that a significant minority of children suffer serious abuse or neglect and nearly a third of young people are victims of bullying during childhood.

[Click here for statistics on the prevalence of child abuse](#)

[Click here for details of NSPCC research](#)

Each week in England more than eight million children take part in some form of sports activity. NSPCC research indicates that a significant minority of this group will be victims of abuse – at home, in the community or in a sport context. Since the introduction and implementation of the Standards for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport in 2002, most sports organisations have been faced with dealing with cases of abuse and serious poor practice by individuals within

their paid or unpaid workforce. However, experience has also shown that the vast majority of adults having regular contact with young people through sport pose no risk and are ideally placed to recognise signs that a child may be being abused and take appropriate steps to report these concerns. It is therefore essential that anyone in contact with young people through their involvement in any programme (including *Sportivate*) is fully aware of the common indicators of abuse and how to respond to concerns.

Although for most young people the experience of participating in sport activity is very positive, there is also a risk that some young people will be harmed as a direct result of their participation in the activity. This may be as a result of an accident, poor practice or abuse by adults or other young people, or bullying by other young people involved in the activity. To reduce the likelihood of children and young people being harmed and ensure young people have a positive experience, it is vital that activity providers (clubs, organisations and individuals) have in place and implement safeguarding policies, procedures and guidance. This will help ensure that all activities take place in a safe environment where everyone involved in the provision of the activity fully understands their responsibility to promote and safeguard the welfare of all children.

[Click here for the Standards for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport](#)

[Click here for the Sports Safeguarding Framework \(post Standards Framework for Safeguarding in Sport\)](#)

1.3 Legal responsibilities and duty of care

Everyone involved in *Sportivate* or other programmes has a legal responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all participating young people. Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010 sets out how organisations and individuals should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and underpins the provisions set out in the Children Acts 1989 and 2004.

The guidance provides a framework for practitioners and front-line managers with specific responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, as well as senior and operational managers in organisations that are responsible for commissioning or providing services to children, young people, parents and carers.

The following diagram sets out the safeguarding responsibilities for all organisations that provide services for children, or work with children need to put in place.

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2010)

Section 2.11



Statutory duties, roles and responsibilities for all organisations providing services to children.

Anyone who provides activities for children and young people, including people who do not have a specific role in relation to safeguarding, has a duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of young people. The duty of care creates legal obligations to comply with reasonable standards. What is considered reasonable will depend on the specific circumstances at the time.

Standards of practice developed by regulatory bodies (for example National Governing Bodies (NGBs)) provide a benchmark for reasonableness in the relevant activity or profession. In respect of the generic aspects of safeguarding, strict application of the guidance contained within Working Together to Safeguard Children will help to ensure the duty of care is met. For small, unaffiliated organisations or individuals providing activity for young people, the safeguarding criteria provide an appropriate interpretation.

All activity deliverers are required to comply with the requirements set out in the safeguarding criteria. Organisations such as CSPs which commission activity must ensure that organisations further down the planning/delivery chain fully understand their safeguarding responsibilities and the requirements within the safeguarding criteria. However, commissioners cannot simply pass the responsibility for safeguarding down the chain, and they retain some degree of accountability at all levels. There is an onus on them to take reasonable steps to ensure that safeguarding guidance and minimum operating standards are actually being implemented. It is vital that everyone involved in the programme recognises their duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of young people and ensures that the protection of young people participating in the programme is fully owned and addressed.

1.4 Introduction to the safeguarding criteria

The **safeguarding criteria** outline the minimum acceptable safeguarding standards that activity providers must demonstrate to be eligible for funding. The criteria have been informed by Working Together to Safeguard Children (2010) but are designed to meet the needs of front line deliverers rather than strategic organisations.

The safeguarding criteria have also been designed to be congruent with the Standards for Safeguarding Children in Sport and should be used by CSPs and any partners who hold a responsibility for assessing an organisation's suitability as an activity provider.

The criteria should be used flexibly and different interpretations can be made dependent on the context and circumstances of the activity and the provider. Some criteria have been designated desirable rather than mandatory, and whilst support should be given (particularly to smaller activity providers) to meet all safeguarding requirements, it is recognised that some elements may not be feasible for every organisation. The following factors should be considered:

[Click here for the Safeguarding Criteria Checklist](#)

A proportionate approach

Organisations should be expected, as a minimum, to demonstrate safeguarding arrangements that are proportionate to their size and available resources. For example individual providers would not be expected to have recruitment and selection procedures in place, but appropriate recruitment processes must have been applied (e.g. CRB checks could be accessed through the commissioning organisation) to ensure that this safeguarding element is addressed.

Organisations or individual providers with little or no experience of providing services are likely to require considerable support to meet the criteria and may need to work through another organisation with a more developed approach to safeguarding.

The way in which the safeguarding criteria are interpreted for and applied by activity providers will need to be tailored to the particular characteristics and needs of each organisation. The following factors should be considered:

- size of organisation and staff group
- experience of providing activities for children
- nature and scope of the activity
- team, individual or multi sport activity
- activity venue/location
- sport/activity specific requirements e.g. attire, equipment, transport
- age range of participants
- specific risk factors (e.g. disabled participants)

The nature of the activity and profile of the participants should inform how safeguarding measures are interpreted and applied.

Safeguarding criteria

1. Child protection/safeguarding policy

Has the organisation provided evidence that it has a child protection/safeguarding policy to which all involved in the activity are required to adhere?

Where appropriate, does the policy reference and meet the requirements of the sports NGB, Local Authority, CSP or school?

Has this policy been endorsed by any local external child protection agencies e.g. Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), Children's Social Care? (Desirable)

Is it clear when and by whom the policy was formally adopted on behalf of the organisation/club?

Is the policy publicised promoted and made available to all stakeholders (particularly staff/coaches, parents and participants)?

2. Procedures

Do the procedures contain clear instructions on what to do in the event of an allegation, incident or suspicion of abuse or poor practice against those involved within the organisation/club?

Do the procedures contain clear instructions on what to do in the event of concerns about the welfare or protection of a child arising outside the sport/activity?

In all instances, are there clear guidelines for recording concerns about the welfare or protection of a child, the organisation's response and reasons?

Are there clear guidelines for reporting concerns where appropriate to external agencies such as Children's Social Care or Police and partner agencies (e.g. the CSP) as well as internally through the organisation's management structure?

Are there complaints and disciplinary procedures to manage concerns about the behaviour of staff, coaches, volunteers, etc?

Is there information about how support can be accessed following an incident? (Desirable)

3. Prevention

Has the organisation identified staff with designated responsibility for safeguarding and protecting children and young people (e.g. a Club Welfare Officer)?

Are there procedures for recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers including safeguarding and criminal records checks for those working with children and young people? In the case of sole providers or small deliverer organisations for whom such procedures are not practical, the commissioning body may need to undertake this function to ensure delivery staff have been appropriately selected and vetted.

Are there codes of conduct and ethics for staff, coaches, volunteers, and participants?

Are there operating procedures in relation to the organisation's duty of care to children and young people (registers, emergency contact details, medical consent etc)?

4. Communication and partnership

Have all stakeholders, including children, young people and carers been informed about the policy and procedures?

Do all stakeholders know how they can raise concerns?

Are there processes for holding and sharing information?

5. Education and training

Are all those working with children and those with responsibility for running activities provided with opportunities to learn about safeguarding and protecting children and young people?

Are staff and volunteers appropriately skilled and qualified to undertake their role?

6. Review and monitoring

Is it clear how, by whom and when the policy and its implementation will be monitored and reviewed?

The safeguarding criteria checklist identifies which of these criteria are deemed critical (i.e. without these in place no activity should be funded) and those which it may be acceptable for a deliverer to commit to improving or developing in order to receive Sport England programme funding.

Section 2: Programme delivery (e.g. *Sportivate*)

2.1. Programme delivery models and safeguarding roles & responsibilities

Although all CSPs are responsible for overseeing the development of local plans, and for accessing funding for example through *Sportivate*, the way in which programmes are managed and organised locally can vary widely. In many cases CSPs have a purely strategic role, with other partners or groups responsible for identifying and commissioning activity deliverers. In others the CSPs may identify and fund deliverers more directly. An example model is shown below:

Irrespective of the delivery model that is adopted, the CSP has the overall responsibility for ensuring that activity providers have fulfilled the minimum safeguarding criteria for the programme. It is acknowledged that the task of monitoring the safeguarding arrangements for all activity providers is extremely challenging, particularly as resources may be limited, however the following information aims to provide some guidance on monitoring safeguarding arrangements.

Commissioning activity

CSPs and other organisations that commission activity are directly responsible for ensuring that the activity provider fulfils the safeguarding criteria. Assessment against the safeguarding criteria may take the form of a requirement for all prospective providers to self-assess using a **pro-forma***; and/or requiring all or a sample of prospective providers to submit evidence of compliance (e.g. submission of child protection policy, details of welfare officer, evidence of safe recruitment checking or other documents). Some CSPs have found it useful to bring deliverers and other programme partners together to clarify and work through the safeguarding requirements, respond to questions and signpost support.

General statements, for example that a deliverer will be 'covered by the school or Local Authority policy' simply because they may be operating on a school or LA site, do not necessarily indicate an understanding or implementation of the specific safeguarding requirements. Nor, crucially, may they mean that those involved would know what to do in circumstances where concerns arise.

Commissioners and providers must agree in writing the safeguarding responsibilities for each party before funding or activity delivery begins. This may be expressed in the form of a contract or Service Level Agreement. The following terms should be included:

The activity provider must:

- meet the programme safeguarding criteria
- ensure all staff and volunteers understand their respective safeguarding roles and responsibilities
- ensure that the safeguarding policy and procedure remain fit for purpose
- ensure that all safeguarding concerns are reported in line with procedures and that the commissioning organisation is informed

The commissioning organisation will:

- provide or signpost support to develop safeguarding practices as required
- be proportionate in monitoring requirements and focus on outcomes and meaning for young people.

Strategic approach

CSPs who allocate the funding to local partners must ensure that these partners fully understand and accept the responsibilities that commissioning brings. It is important that the CSPs have full confidence in the ability of all organisations involved in this process and should agree with these partners how compliance with the safeguarding criteria will be accessed and monitored.

CSPs should aim to ensure all partners share a commitment to safeguarding values and principles and establish strong partnership working to ensure effective and manageable monitoring systems. This can be achieved by educating, informing and influencing partners about their safeguarding responsibilities, involving partners in identifying any potential weaknesses in the monitoring arrangements and devising solutions.

Dependent on the local arrangements for commissioning activity providers, the partners should jointly manage the process of ensuring that activity providers have met and continue to meet the required standards set out in the safeguarding criteria. This should be achieved by:

- raising awareness and understanding of the safeguarding criteria and the toolkit
- ensuring effective implementation of the core criteria prior to funding/delivery
- providing support to organisations to meet the criteria
- monitoring activity provider's safeguarding arrangements e.g. carrying out spot checks, responding to concerns, implementing self-audit systems

It is important to encourage everyone to appreciate that assessing compliance with safeguarding criteria should be more than just a paper exercise. In order for the criteria to achieve the desired outcome of protecting young people from harm and contributing to a more positive experience, ongoing monitoring arrangements should be in place to help ensure the organisation implements effective safeguarding practices and that all those who are involved with the organisation understand and comply with the policy and procedures.

2.2. Activity commissioners and providers

In addition to CSPs, Local Authorities, Schools and sports governing bodies there is a wide range of organisations that may be involved directly or indirectly in the commissioning or provision of Sportivate active activity. These include:

- Connexions
- youth organisations
- libraries
- primary care trusts
- sports development teams
- sport clubs
- independent individuals with particular skills in an activity

The variety of organisations and individuals involved in commissioning or providing activity can make the task of assessing the level of understanding of safeguarding practice more complex. Some of the organisations involved in programmes are supported by regulatory or governing bodies, examples of which include:

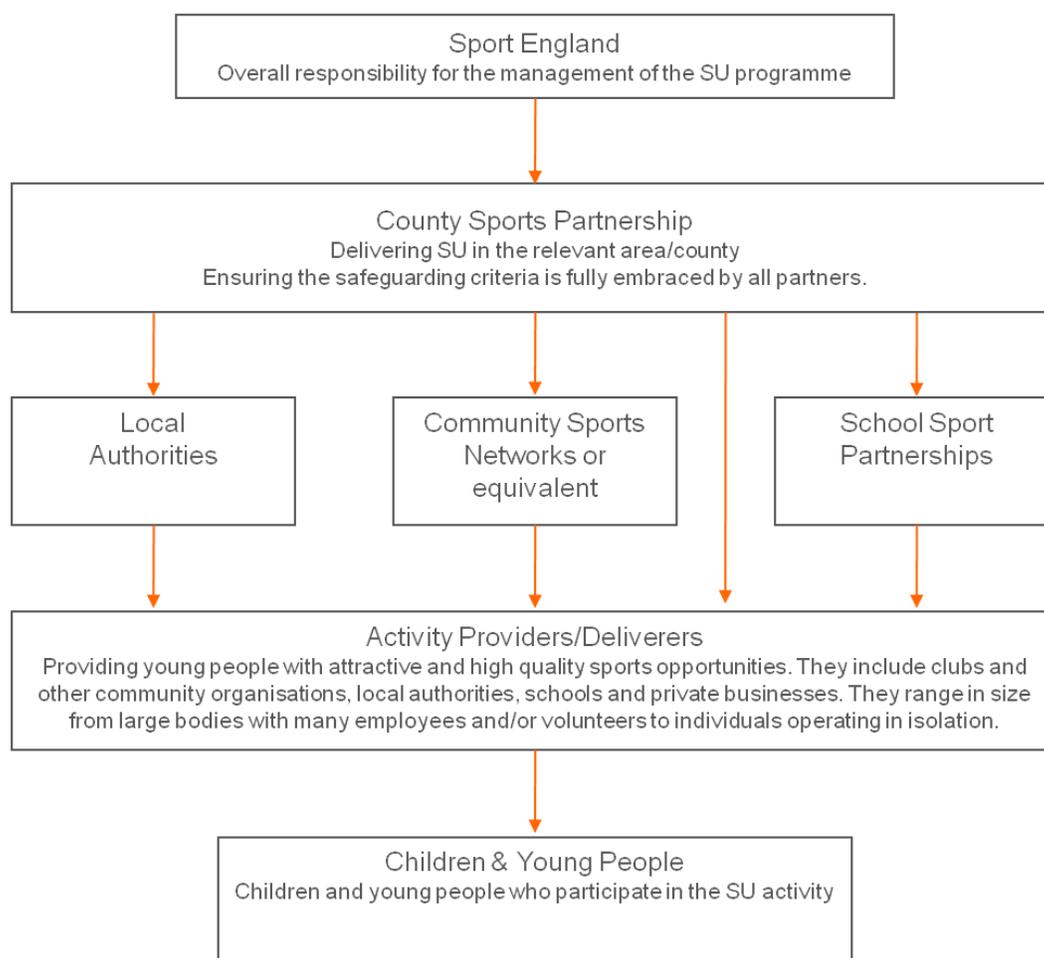
- sport governing bodies
- education department (Ofsted – Office for Standards in Education)

- local authorities (Local Government Ombudsman)
- primary care trusts (General Medical Council)
- Charity Commission

Organisations that are under the jurisdiction of a regulatory body may be required to meet the regulatory bodies' standards for safeguarding children and may have access to accreditation schemes/kite marks e.g. Clubmark.

These bodies may also provide:

- external regulation
- child protection case management support



- professional development/qualifications including safeguarding training
- access to CRB disclosures

Although organisations that are linked to an external regulatory body may be more likely to have existing good practice for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, this should not be assumed. It is important that their safeguarding arrangements are verified.

Some providers involved in, for example, *Sportivate* may be independent and have no existing safeguarding arrangements.

These providers may not hold a recognised qualification and have not previously had access to external support. In these instances there is a greater onus on the commissioning body to identify any safeguarding shortfalls and provide or signpost to opportunities to address them.

Section 3:

Achieving the safeguarding criteria

3.1. Child protection / safeguarding policy

Complying with the safeguarding criteria is a funding requirement for all activity providers, who are required to:

- have/develop a child protection/safeguarding policy to which all involved in the activity are required to adhere
- where appropriate ensure the policy makes reference to and meets the requirements of the sports NGB, local authority, CSP, LSCB or school
- have the policy endorsed by local external child protection agencies e.g. LSCB (Desirable)
- formally adopt the policy (e.g. by management board or committee)
- publicise, promote and make the policy available to all stakeholders

A policy is a document which sets out a course of action, guiding principles or procedure that is adopted and implemented by an individual or organisation. As with any significant policy it is essential that the safeguarding policy is a written document, although the policy statement itself may be brief (perhaps only 1-2 sides of A4 paper), as most of the detail will be found in the procedures section or action plans that accompany the policy.

Some activity providers will already have a safeguarding policy in place. Any activity provider without an existing policy should be required to develop or adopt one. Some organisations that are under the jurisdiction of a regulatory body (e.g. sport NGB) will be required to comply with the external policy. In these circumstances it is not sufficient for activity providers simply to adopt the relevant policy in its entirety. A policy statement should be developed that addresses the needs of the local organisation/provider, whilst making appropriate reference to the external body.

Key safeguarding policy inclusions

Statement of intent

- Why is the safeguarding policy important?
- identify that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and everyone is required to adhere to the policy
- acknowledgment of the duty of care and other legal responsibilities

Introduction

- sets out core values and underpinning principles

Policy objectives and targets

Roles and responsibilities for delivering the new policy

Implementation

- How the policy will be put into practice within all levels of the organisation and within all policies and procedures
- How employees and volunteers will be supported in developing their understanding and awareness of safeguarding

- **How the policy will be monitored and when it will be reviewed**

[Click here for an example of a safeguarding/child protection policy](#)

A best practice outline of the key stages in developing/reviewing and implementing a safeguarding policy:

Step 1: Ownership

Identify a senior person within the organisation to champion the policy. This person should be able to present the policy to the Board, committee or senior management for approval. In some circumstances, there may be significant opposition to implementing a safeguarding policy. Therefore, it is important to ensure compelling evidence is available to support the proposed policy and the fact that its implementation will provide enhanced safeguards for young people.

Step 2: Responsibilities

Agree how the policy will be developed. This could be taken on by the designated person or other individual or a policy development group may be formed. This will enable individuals who have a close interest and/or expertise in a subject to be involved in the development of the policy.

Step 3: Preparation

Prepare initial draft for review.

Step 4: Consultation

Carry out consultation with stakeholders including partner agencies to ensure compatibility with any relevant policy and LSCB guidelines. Ensure that stakeholders are actively engaged with and can properly influence the policy making process. The size and scope of the consultation will depend on a number of variables, including the time and resources available and the number of stakeholders.

Stakeholders will include:

- children and young people
- parents
- coaches/instructors
- staff/volunteers
- relevant partner agencies

The consultation should involve the stakeholders being presented with details of the proposed or amended policy and tends to work best where there are a series of questions or requests for comments on specific areas. Consultations can be carried out using a range of methods including questionnaire or through a focus group. The manner in which consultation with young people is carried out must be age appropriate.

Step 5: Revise and approve policy

Revise draft taking into account the views and suggestions of stakeholders (as far as is possible) from the consultation exercises. Seek statements of support from CSP, CPSU, LSCB and other key bodies. Obtain final approval from the Board or relevant management body. Check that all other existing policies are amended to fit with the new/revised policy. Ensure all affected stakeholders receive timely information about any significant changes and if appropriate, receive training so they are able to prepare for change and where necessary update or revise their own practices.

Step 6: Promotion

Consider holding an official launch, particularly if the policy is new. Ensure copies of the policy (if available in hard copy) are distributed to key stakeholders and the policy is promoted on the organisation's website, within the activity venue and in newsletters etc.

Step 7: Implementation & monitoring

- ensure staff and volunteers are appropriately informed and / or trained
- provide appropriate information for young people and parents/carers
- establish systems to support the implementation of the policy
- monitor compliance with the policy
- evaluate and review of the policy

3.2. Procedures

Safeguarding criteria require activity providers to:

Have in place procedures that contain clear guidelines on:

- what to do in the event of an allegation, incident or suspicion of abuse or poor practice against those involved within the organisation/club
- what to do in the event of concerns about the welfare or protection of a child arising outside the sport/activity
- recording concerns about the welfare or protection of a child, the organisation's response and reasons
- reporting concerns where appropriate to external agencies such as Children's Social Care or Police and partner agencies (e.g. the CSP) as well as internally through the organisation's management structure

Have in place complaints and disciplinary procedures to manage concerns about the behaviour of staff, coaches, volunteers and participants.

Provide information about how support can be accessed following an incident.

Procedures provide clear instruction on what action to take in specific circumstances. Procedures help to ensure transparency, consistency and fairness in approach and can prevent uncertainty and unnecessary delay when faced with an unfamiliar situation. In order to provide programme activity, organisations must have appropriate procedures for responding to concerns and managing complaints and disciplinary action.

It is important that anyone involved in the activity understands that it is not their role to investigate allegations of abuse but it is everyone's responsibility to respond to any concerns. The procedures should set out the action that should be taken if abuse or poor practice is suspected. It is important also to cover bullying. The procedures must apply to everyone involved in the provision of activity.

The government guidance [*'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused'*](#) provides detailed information on how to respond to concerns.

Key inclusions for procedures for responding to concerns, allegations, incidents or suspicion of abuse or poor practice within the organisation/club and those that arise outside the sport/activity:

- **Definition of abuse**

Outline the different categories of abuse; physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and bullying, making reference to the statutory definitions of abuse. It is useful to give activity/sport specific examples where possible. Some organisations may develop separate anti-bullying policy and procedures.

[Click here for examples of Anti-Bullying Policies](#)

- **Recognition of abuse**

It is useful to describe the signs and indicators which may be cause for concern. It is important to recognise that some groups, e.g. children with disabilities and some ethnic minority groups are more likely to experience abuse and may also face additional difficulties in disclosing abuse. Some organisations also include information on the effects of abuse.

- **Response of organisation to any signs or suspicions of abuse that arise from outside the sport/activity**

Define the lines of responsibility, including the role of the designated person. Outline the process that must be followed, including reporting concerns to Children's Social Care and Police.

- **Responses to allegations of abuse against a member of staff or volunteer**

Define the lines of responsibility, including the role of the designated person and outline the action to be taken by the organisation. This should include information on the processes that will be followed, including reporting concerns to Children's Social Care and Police, and internally in relation to the individual who is the subject of the accusation.

- **Response to a child disclosing abuse**

Describe how a child making a disclosure of abuse should be treated e.g. listening, reassuring, avoiding leading questions and identifying support. It is essential that accurate details of all concerns are documented. This section should include details of what information should be recorded and by whom and time scales for passing on this information.

Complaints procedures

A complaints procedure should outline the action that will be taken following receipt of a complaint about the organisation, the services and/or staff and members of the organisation. A well publicised complaints policy helps demonstrate that the organisation has a positive approach to complaints and encourages individuals to raise concerns.

Key inclusions

- **Introduction to the procedure.**

Define the scope of the complaints procedure – for whom are the procedures intended and what would constitute a complaint/concern and a formal complaint? In addition, it is important to highlight the key factors that define the organisation's general approach to complaints.

- **How to make a complaint.**

This section should outline the procedure that the complainant should follow. It should include:

1. the manner in which complaints/concerns can be made/raised e.g. by phone, in person, in writing (letter, email etc), via suggestions box etc
2. process for making a formal complaint

- **How the organisation will respond.**

As many complaints can be resolved without recourse to formal procedures, this section should make reference to how the organisation will seek to bring about an early resolution. The procedure should outline the process for handling formal complaints. This should include who will respond and the timeframes involved and what happens if the complainant is not satisfied by the response. Links should be made to ensure that any complaints that involve welfare or safeguarding concerns are managed in line with the safeguarding/child protection policy and procedures.

- **Information on support services.**

Both the victim of abuse and anyone who is investigated for allegations of abuse may benefit

from information about support services. It is also useful to provide this information for anyone else who has been affected by an incident of abuse, including family members and those involved in responding to the incident.

Disciplinary procedures

A disciplinary procedure is a process that supports the management of breaches of the organisation's code of conduct or rules and/or poor performance, which can lead to disciplinary sanctions, including dismissal in the most serious cases. Disciplinary procedures must be fair and reasonable. The key points of a fair process are:

- the individual should understand the case against him/her
- the individual should have an opportunity to state their case
- the individual should be given an opportunity to appeal the decision

The revised Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) Code of Practice on disciplinary and grievance procedures sets out the principles for handling disciplinary or dismissal situations in the workplace. Any organisation with employees should aim to ensure their disciplinary (and grievance) procedures follow the good-practice advice set out in the revised ACAS code of practice. The principles contained in the code are also useful in informing a disciplinary procedure for volunteers.

[Click here to access the ACAS Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance](#)

A disciplinary procedure should include:

- the procedure for disciplinary action
- the type of conduct/performance that might lead to disciplinary action
- possible sanctions/actions

It is generally preferable if changes in behaviour or performance can be achieved without recourse to formal disciplinary procedures providing that this course of action will not place young people at risk of harm. However, it must be acknowledged that there are some behaviours or practices that may be considered too serious for informal resolution and where the only option is to apply disciplinary procedures subject to the outcome of external investigations.

[Click here for other good practice guidelines](#)

Whistle blowing

Whistle blowing guidelines encourage individuals to raise concerns of abuse and poor practice within the activity with the reassurance that they will be protected and supported by the organisation. The inclusion of such guidelines is important to support individuals with legitimate concerns who may be fearful of reprisals. Some organisations develop separate Whistle blowing policies. [Click here for an example of a Whistle Blowing Policy](#)

Media interest

Incidents of child abuse can generate significant media interest. It is important to consider how requests for information from the media will be managed.

3.3. Prevention

Safeguarding criteria require activity providers to:

- identify staff with designated responsibility for safeguarding and protecting children and young people e.g. Welfare Officer
- **Have in place:**

1. procedures for recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers including safeguarding checks (CRB) for those working with children and young people (see section below titled 'Support to smaller organisations')
2. codes of conduct and ethics for staff, coaches, volunteers, and participants
3. operating procedures in relation to the organisation's duty of care to children and young people (Registers, emergency contact details, medical consent etc)

The above criteria are intended to contribute to preventing abuse and poor practice. Programme activity providers should develop these elements to meet the needs of their organisation.

Designated person e.g. Welfare Officer, Lead Safeguarding Officer

The designated person has an important role in ensuring that effective policy, procedures and guidelines for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people are in place and fully implemented. All organisations working with children should ensure there is an individual who leads the approach to safeguarding.

Welfare Officers: key areas of responsibility

- be the first point of contact for child protection and safeguarding concerns
- responding to child protection and poor practice concerns ensuring cases of suspected abuse are referred to the relevant authorities
- providing a source of support, advice and expertise within the organisation in relation to the implementation of procedures that safeguard and promote the welfare of children

It is important that the role is taken on by an individual with the appropriate knowledge and skills. The organisation should provide clear information about the scope of the role and offer appropriate support to ensure the responsibilities of the position can be fulfilled and is in a position to introduce any appropriate changes to procedures and practices.

The person who takes on designated person position should not have any significant conflicts of interest that could prevent her/him from fully supporting the needs of children and being effective in the role. Conflicts of interest have been known to occur where the designated person is also a coach and has been required to respond to a serious concern about a close coaching colleague that s/he may wish to support.

It may be difficult for organisations that do not currently have a designated person to identify a suitable candidate for the position. Some of the following strategies may assist with this process:

- advertise the role internally and circulate the job/task description to interested parties
- ask partner organisations to help in publicising the search for a designated person
- ask other organisations whether their designated person can assist until a suitable person is identified
- making direct approaches to individuals who have the appropriate experience
- arranging a basic level awareness course as an introduction for potential volunteers.

Recruitment and selection procedures

Organisations have a duty to ensure that anyone working with children is suitable for the role. Safe recruitment requires safeguarding issues to be considered at every stage of the recruitment process. It is important to acknowledge that although the vast majority of people involved in the provision of activity for young people do not pose a risk to children, there are individuals who work, or seek to work, in organisations who could pose a risk to children and young people.

Recruitment and selection procedures should include undertaking and risk assessing enhanced level CRB checks in line with CRB guidance about eligibility. The government is proposing changes to both the CRB and Vetting and Barring schemes (probably to be introduced from

2012), and in the meantime organisations should maintain their current robust safeguarding processes.

[Click here for Children's Workforce Development Council Recruiting Safely Guidance](#)

Key elements of a robust safe recruitment process

- **Candidate information**

All information for potential candidates, including any publicity/adverts should make specific reference to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and reference to the requirement to seek an enhanced CRB disclosure as part of the recruitment process. This will include job/task descriptions and person specifications. The application should also contain appropriate safeguarding sections.

- **Application forms**

All applicants should be required to complete an application form that includes a self-disclosure of conviction, cautions, warning and disciplinary action by other organisations involving children. The form should seek an explanation for any gaps in an applicant's employment history. The applicant should also be asked to provide evidence of any relevant qualifications. Application forms should be carefully scrutinised to pick up on any discrepancies or anomalies in their paperwork, which may be addressed with the candidate at interview.

- **Following up references**

The recruitment procedure should require a minimum of two references that specifically address the applicant's suitability to work with children.

[Click here for a reference template form](#)

- **Interview**

Everyone should be interviewed in person to assess their suitability to work with children in addition to their suitability for the position.

[Click here for sample recruitment induction checklist](#)

- **Verifying an applicant's identity and right to work in UK and qualifications**

- **Completion of an enhanced CRB disclosure**

- **The successful candidate should be asked to complete a CRB disclosure prior to commencing any aspect of their role that involves contact with children.**

- **Induction process**

The induction period is a critical part of the recruitment process. The key safeguarding elements include:

1. introduction to the organisation's safeguarding policy and procedures including codes of conduct and disciplinary procedures
2. assessment of learning needs and provision of any required training/coaching and mentoring are provided to support identified needs.

Support to smaller organisations

It may not be feasible for some (particularly very small) delivery organisations or 'sole providers' to have or develop all these policies and procedures. In this case it is essential that the commissioning body supports the organisation to meet these important requirements and ensures that core recruitment/selection and other requirements (e.g. CRB checking, safeguarding induction and identified training) is made available to all relevant delivery personnel as a condition of funding. In addition, organisations can be supported by commissioners providing or signposting them to safeguarding templates and good practice examples.

Support and appraisal

It is important that new recruits are supported in their role and that any concerns arising are effectively addressed. An appraisal process that addresses any areas where support/improvement is required should be provided, not only for new recruits but for all staff and volunteers.

[Click here for a sample safe recruitment procedure](#)

Codes of conduct

A code of conduct defines acceptable behaviour for the specific group to which it applies. *Sportivate* and other activity providers should ensure there are codes of conduct that cover all staff, volunteers and participants. The code of conduct should include statements about appropriate boundaries to behaviour and should emphasise that any behaviour that is discriminatory and/or offensive is unacceptable. In addition, the code of conduct should include behaviours that are unacceptable and cannot be condoned.

In developing a code of conduct the following areas should be considered:

- physical contact
- communication
- responsibilities e.g. supervision
- provision of care
- relationships
- ethical issues e.g. fair play

[Click here for example codes of conduct e.g. coach, participant and parents](#)

Key points on developing a code of conduct

- involve young people in developing their own code of conduct
- all staff and volunteers should be expected to contribute and take responsibility to ensure a positive environment
- codes of conduct must link closely to the organisation's disciplinary procedures
- include how to manage challenging behaviour

[Click here for guidance on managing challenging behaviour](#)

Operating procedures

Sportivate and other activity providers must ensure there are robust operating procedures in place that support the provider to meet their duty of care towards the young people who participate in their activity and help prevent incidents of abuse.

Registration/consent

It is essential that activity providers collect all necessary information from participants at the point of registration and ensure attendance is monitored. In addition, prior to participation, the participant and their parent/carer should be provided with full information on the activity and clear participation guidelines and be asked to provide any relevant consent e.g. photography, communication by text messages etc. Specific registration/consent forms have been developed for the *Sportivate* programme.

[Click here for examples of registration and consent forms](#)

In order to help minimise incidents of abuse or poor practice that originate from within the activity, it is vital that those responsible for providing activities manage the environment in a way that minimises the likelihood of harm to children and young people.

Activity providers should consider what safeguards need to be put in place and develop clear guidelines and procedures. Areas to consider include:

Supervision

All organisations that provide activity should ensure that there are appropriate staffing and supervision ratios of adults to children. The ratio will depend on the age of the young people and the nature of the activity being planned. Some children with disabilities may also require additional support/higher levels of supervision.

[Click here for guidance on supervision ratios](#)

[Click here for information on the additional vulnerability of some groups of children/young people e.g. disability](#)

Use of changing rooms/toilets

Activities that may require participants to change into suitable clothing should have in place a policy to ensure the safe use of changing facilities. This can be challenging when the activity takes place within a multi-use facility where changing facilities open for public use.

[Click here for guidance on changing room facilities](#)

Photography

Parents and carers want to be able to celebrate the achievements of their children when taking part in activities through photographs and videos, and sports organisations may also want to promote their activities to encourage increased participation. While banning photography is not advocated, it is essential that the risks that this may pose to children (e.g. the use of personal information associated with images that could lead to the identification and grooming of, or unwanted contact with, children) are understood. Reasonable steps should be taken to reduce these risks.

It is essential that organisations have in place effective preventative measures to deter anyone with undesirable intentions from taking and publishing inappropriate images, and respond to any concerns arising.

A photography policy should cover:

- requirements for consents from parents/carers and young people
- guidelines on taking images during the activity
- filming for coaching purposes
- publication of imagery (e.g. in the press, on the internet)
- guidance on appropriate imagery
- guidance on secure storage of images

[Click here for guidance on photography and images of children](#)

Late collection

Activity providers should have procedures in place that outline the steps to be taken in the event that a parent/carer does not pick up their child at the end of the session.

Transport/trips

Where an activity would require the provision of transport for young people, it is important to develop guidance in this area. There are also many additional safeguarding considerations for activity providers that wish to organise trips.

[Click here for guidelines on transporting children and young people](#)

[Click here for guidance on away trips and hosting](#)

Missing Children (Desirable)

Organisations that provide activity for young people may wish to develop a procedure for responding if a child goes missing. This may be more relevant where young people are taken on trips where the risk of a young person going missing may be increased.

Communication by text, email and social networking sites (e.g. Facebook)

Some organisations may wish to communicate with young people by text, email and/or social networking sites. As these methods are sometimes a feature in cases of bullying or 'grooming' a child for abuse, it is important that activity providers who use these methods of communication put in place guidelines to help support safe practices.

[Click here for safeguarding guidelines on text and email messaging](#)

Internet use

The internet and its range of services have many positive uses which activity providers may wish to utilise as part of their activity. It is important to recognise that the internet provides access to facilities that can be used to 'groom' children as well as providing the main route for the distribution of images of child abuse. Activity providers who provide young people with access to the internet and/or wish to use social networking services and social media should ensure that they fully consider the available guidance and develop a policy that supports the safe use of these services.

[Click here for guidance on promoting the safe and responsible use of social networking services and social media](#)

[Click here for safeguarding guidance regarding involving young people in mixed aged sport/activity](#)

[Click here for parents safeguarding Twitter guidance](#)

3.4. Communication and partnership

The safeguarding criteria require activity providers to:

- inform all stakeholders, including children, young people and carers about the policy and procedures
- ensure all stakeholders know how they can raise concerns
- have in place processes for holding and sharing information

Once safeguarding policy and procedures have been developed, it is vital that all stakeholders are fully informed of the relevant content and implications and know how to obtain copies if required. Organisations should encourage children and adults to raise any concerns and ensure everyone knows how to access help.

It is also important to recognise that working in partnership with children & young people and their parents and carers is vital to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

There are a number of approaches to ensuring stakeholders are informed:

- invite a representative from stakeholder groups to sit on committees or working groups
- presentations/seminars for interested groups
- prepare written communications e.g. newsletter, updates on website etc
- put information in a club handbook/new member handbook
- e-mail stakeholders website links to policy and procedures

Confidentiality and information sharing

Sharing information amongst professionals is essential to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This section should set out the standards for ensuring confidentiality is maintained for all parties involved in an allegation of abuse, whilst also identifying the circumstances where confidential information may be shared with relevant agencies/individuals in the interests of protecting children.

[Click here for HM Government Guidance on Information Sharing](#)

[Click here for the Partnership Check and Challenge tool](#)

3.5. Education and training

The safeguarding criteria require activity providers to:

- provide everyone working with children and those with responsibility for running activities with opportunities to learn about safeguarding and protecting children and young people
- ensure all staff and volunteers appropriately skilled and qualified to undertake their role

It is essential that anyone working with young people:

- understands the key principles of good practice when working with children and is aware of how to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- understands the different forms of child abuse
- recognises the signs and indicators of child abuse
- knows what action to take in the event of a child protection or poor practice concern

Activity providers must ensure that those individuals working with children are provided with appropriate opportunities to learn about safeguarding. It is widely accepted that anyone in these positions should, as a minimum attend a CPSU recognised/approved introductory safeguarding and protecting children awareness course which meet the learning outcomes identified in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2010). In addition to the basic awareness course, individuals with a designated responsibility for safeguarding (e.g. Welfare Officers) should attend further training to ensure they are adequately prepared for the position.

[Click here for information about recognised safeguarding training](#)

The CPSU led the development of a guidance document: **Roles, Skills, Knowledge & Competencies for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in the Sport Sector**, which provides detailed information for anyone responsible for the provision of learning opportunities. The document is designed in a toolkit format and describes the key roles within sport, identifying the appropriate training and/or qualifications for each role and the current training courses and learning opportunities available.

It is important that there are ongoing learning opportunities to ensure all staff and volunteers fully understand safeguarding and the associated responsibilities. In addition to formal training courses there are many other vehicles to support learning. These include:

- coaching and/or mentoring
- team meetings/discussions facilitated by the designated person
- induction
- reviewing incidents
- self evaluation

Activity providers must ensure anyone involved in the programme keeps the skills required to undertake their role up-to-date and responds to any relevant changes in areas that have an influence on practice. In addition to safeguarding, this is likely to include:

- working with children
- equality and diversity
- activity specific training e.g. NGB coaching courses
- first aid

3.6. Review and monitoring

The programme safeguarding criteria require activity providers to:

- Be clear how, by whom and when the policy and its implementation will be monitored and reviewed.

Monitoring and reviewing are vital aspects of safeguarding practice and should test whether or not current practice meets the needs of children and young people. Organisations should ensure that their procedures become embedded in practice and are subject to regular review and monitoring

Organisations should review safeguarding arrangements:

- to support continual improvement in safeguarding
- to help identify and revise any potentially harmful policies or procedures or make services safer
- to support improved decision-making

It is important when reviewing safeguarding arrangements to consult with a variety of stakeholders, including young people and their parents/carers.

Section 4: Templates, exemplars, useful contacts & resources

4.1.1. Information for CSPs and other commissioning partners

- [Examples of good practice in partnership working](#) (available soon)

4.2. Sample policies and procedures

- [Safeguarding](#)
- [Responding to reports, disclosures and concerns](#)
- [Whistle blowing](#)
- [Recruitment and selection](#)

- [Anti-bullying](#)
- [Codes of conduct](#)
- [Supervision ratios](#)
- [Changing rooms/toilets](#)
- [Photography](#)
- [Transport/trips](#)
- [Missing children](#)
- [Communication by text, email](#)
- [Internet use](#)

4.3. Guidance

- [Duty of care](#)
- [Information sharing](#)
- [Managing poor practice within the organisation](#)
- [Managing challenging behaviour](#)
- [Social media](#)
- [Safeguarding checklist](#)

4.4. Templates

- [Safeguarding criteria checklist](#)
- [Incident reporting form](#)
- [Registration/consent form](#)

4.5. Good practice examples

- [Consultation processes](#) (*available soon*)

4.6. Useful information and contacts

- [Safeguarding training](#)
- [Useful web links](#)