## **Guide to safeguarding - for clubs, coaches and volunteers**

Sport helps children to grow and develop and can provide opportunities for enjoyment and achievement. Through sport children can develop valuable qualities such as leadership, confidence and self-esteem. In order to gain the full benefits of involvement in a sports activity it is essential that the organisation is operating in a safe and child friendly manner.

It is essential that sports coaches and leaders adopt good practice when dealing with children and ensure that their safety is paramount. This will ensure that children can enjoy sport within a safe and secure environment where they feel protected and empowered to make the most suitable choices. Providing children with positive sporting experiences means that they will be more likely to achieve their true potential.

It is the responsibility of everyone involved to ensure that sports activities are safe and fun!

### General advice for sports club, organisations & coaches / leaders

**Photography**

All photography and videoing need to comply with a club/organisation's child protection policy. There is evidence that certain individuals are known to visit sporting events/activities to take inappropriate photographs or video footage of sports people (including young and disabled participants) in vulnerable positions. All coaches should be vigilant about this possibility. Any concerns during an event should be reported to a designated child protection/welfare officer or other responsible person.

**Videoing as a coaching aid**

Video can be a legitimate coaching aid for club coaches and teachers. However, if it is used make sure that children and their parents/carers consent and understand that it is part of the coaching programme. Make sure that the films are then stored safely.

**Qualifications & Training**

Do you have the appropriate, up to date qualifications? All coaches/leaders must hold an up to date nationally recognised governing body coaching qualification/s which is appropriate to the level and sport being coached. In general, an assistant coach must hold a Level 1 qualification and should coach under the supervision of a more experience and qualified coach. A Level 2 qualification is required to coach on your own.

**Do you have the appropriate, up to date training?**   
All coaches/leaders must have attended recognised safeguarding and protecting children in sport training. Training should be recognised by the appropriate National Governing Body, Sports Coach UK or Local Safeguarding Children Partnership. If working within schools, coaches/leaders must have attended education awareness training.

**Do you have valid insurance cover?**   
All Coaches/leaders must have appropriate and up to date insurance cover.

**Are you working within identified Minimum Operating Standards (MOS)?**   
All coaches/leaders should ensure that they are aware of, and work within, any MOS relating to their coaching role. These may vary depending on the activity/setting.

### Coaching Delivery Checklist

**Do you know your participants?**

As a coach/leader it is important that you have relevant details of participants which may affect their involvement in sport or physical activity. This could include any medical information or particular needs. Parents should be asked to complete a consent form where this information is provided along with emergency contact details.

**Are you coaching in a safe environment, using safe equipment?**   
All coaches/leaders should undertake and document a risk assessment or ensure a risk assessment has been undertaken prior to the delivery of activities.

**Are you working within the recommended player/coach ratio?**   
The ratio of coaches to participants varies from sport to sport and should be based on:

* The age and ability of the children involved
* The risk involved in the activity
* Needs of disabled young people in the group

Contact your sport’s National Governing Body or employer for sport specific guidance.

**Are your activities appropriate?**   
Coaches/leaders must ensure the activities they direct, or advocate are appropriate for the age, maturity, experience and ability of the individual. It is recommended that all coaches/ leaders plan sessions in advance, identifying specific outcomes and appropriate activities in line with National Governing Body guidelines.

**What are your coaching outcomes?**   
A number of organisations run sports activities to hit a range of outcomes, these include:

* To increase participation levels
* To support the delivery of the National Curriculum
* To develop talented athletes
* To provide diversionary activities to tackle social agenda issues
* To promote and develop school – club links.

All coaches/leaders should be aware of their coaching outcomes and adopt their coaching, accordingly, taking into account factors which motivate participants.

**Do you know what to do in case of an incident, accident, allegation, disclosure?**   
Coaches/leaders should be aware of, and follow, the policies and procedures of the deploying organisation or NGB and have all the relevant reporting forms and emergency contact details available at all activities.

### Get to know your policies and procedures

**Child Protection Policy**

Coaches/leaders should be aware of and follow the relevant child protection/welfare policy. This should include:

* When and how to report a concern, allegation, disclosure about poor practice or possible abuse
* Who to contact should a child welfare incident arise

Remember it is not the responsibility of a coach/leader to decide if a child is being abused but to act on any concerns you may have.

**Coaches Code of Conduct**   
Coaches/leaders should be aware of and follow the relevant coaches' code of conduct. As role models, high standards of behaviour and appearance must be consistently displayed. This should include the appropriate usage of text and email messaging.

**Health & Safety**   
All coaches/leaders should be aware of, and follow, the appropriate health & safety policy.

**Risk Assessments**

**Participant consent forms** (including details of emergency contacts, medical history and where necessary consent for photography and/or video to be taken)

**How to respond to an incident or accident**

**Who to contact should a health and safety concern arise.**

**Equality Policy**   
The rights, dignity and worth of everyone should be respected and everyone should be treated equally within the context of their sport. Coaches/leaders should be aware of, and work within the relevant equity policy.

**Recruitment & Screening**   
All sports coaches/leaders who have direct contact with children and young people must be appropriately screened to establish suitability to work with this age group, this should include:

* The successful completion of an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check
* A minimum of 2 references are taken and followed up
* Qualifications are checked