

# Briefing for schools: organising safe sporting events

June 2017

Schools have a responsibility to make sure children are kept safe during school sports activities both on and off site and in and out of normal school hours. They must also ensure that people providing these activities for children (on a paid or voluntary basis) are suitable to do so.

## Schools hosting a sporting event

When planning an event a member of staff from the hosting school should be nominated to take overall responsibility for its organisation and ensure that safeguards are put in place, seeking advice from the school's designated safeguarding lead where necessary.

Key considerations for planning a safe event include:

- drawing up and implementing an event safeguarding plan with relevant policies and procedures, in consultation with the leads from other organisations involved i.e. schools, the School Games Organiser, coaches, clubs or sporting National Governing Bodies (NGBs) and making sure it is widely shared. The [CPSU Partnership Check and Challenge Tool](#) can assist with this
- drawing up a code of conduct for staff, volunteers, coaches, venue staff and children participating on the day and sharing this with the other schools
- following safe recruitment procedures if non-school staff are involved (whether paid or voluntary)
- making sure the relevant consent is obtained from parents before the event
- carrying out a pre-event risk assessment
- agreeing appropriate levels of supervision on the day for different groups and group sizes, taking into account what would happen if there was an injury or emergency and a member of staff or volunteer had to leave to accompany a child to hospital
- communicating how any welfare or child protection concerns should be dealt with and by whom on the day if they arise
- ensuring adequate first aid cover is available on the day
- making sure information about young participants' medical conditions, allergies or additional vulnerabilities is obtained and available at the event and

that this information is shared beforehand with the relevant people from participating schools or sporting bodies

- ensuring that the relevant liability insurance has been taken out.

The Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) provide detailed guidance on planning [Safe sport events, activities and competitions](#).

### **Visiting other premises for a sporting event**

A member of school staff should take the lead in coordinating the trip and ensuring safeguarding arrangements have been put in place, taking into account the points listed above.

It is also advisable to visit the venue during the planning stages to:

- carry out a risk assessment of the premises
- discuss how things will run on the day with the venue's contact person.
- view relevant policies and procedures and share the school's policies, working together to make sure they are as aligned as possible to ensure safety at the event.

A plan to safely transport children to the venue is also needed. Some schools may wish to use a coach or minibus service. The organiser of the trip will need to make sure a reputable company is used with vetted staff, and will need to ensure there is adequate supervision from school staff or volunteers for the journey.

If staff or volunteer drivers such as parents will be transporting children in their own cars, they should not be put in a position where they are alone with a child. There should be another adult present and preferably more than one child. Parents should be informed of arrangements prior to the trip to make sure they are in agreement.

If parents wish to transport each other's children they can make a private arrangement to do so, provided this fits with the school's planning and arrangements.

The organiser will need to make the driver aware of their legal responsibility for the safety of the children in their car. In all instances, the driver's insurance, MOT and driving licence should be checked before the journey. The driver is also responsible for ensuring that children wear seatbelts.

The CPSU provides information about [transporting children to events](#).

### **Using external coaches for sports activities**

Some schools may wish to use an external provider to come into the school during the day or as an extra-curricular activity to teach a specific sport. The head teacher

will need to ensure that safe recruitment practices are followed to prevent unsuitable people from entering the school.

Sports Coach UK has produced [minimum standards for coaches](#). When looking to employ a coach, even though an agency, schools should take these standards into account to ensure the person is suitable for the role:

- age - the advised minimum age for a lead coach is 18 years and over and 16 years and older for an assistant coach
- membership of a governing body for the sport they are coaching
- relevant qualifications – governing bodies of sport usually require independent coaches to have a minimum standard of training, which is a UKCC Level 2 qualification in the sport they are coaching.
- insurance - recommended insurance includes Employers Liability cover, Public Indemnity, and Professional Indemnity
- a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) (England and Wales), Disclosure Scotland or Access NI check is required if coaching on a regular, intensive basis or unsupervised with children and young people
- policies and procedures around code of practice, child protection, health and safety and equality reflecting relevant NGB requirements
- clear procedures on with whom concerns would be shared e.g. the relevant club or NGB and how they would be dealt with
- a first aid qualification
- child protection training has been completed.

[County Sports Partnerships](#) (CSPs) can help schools find coaches who have been vetted and meet minimum qualification requirements.

Schools should employ the same safe recruitment practices they would use with any other member of staff such as a face-to-face interview, identity, qualification and training checks, reference checks and vetting checks if they will be involved in regular or unsupervised contact with children.

The school will also need to put into place an induction plan and agree supervision levels and a probationary and review period.

### **Using volunteers as coaches**

If parents, carers or members of the public help out with sports coaching, the school should ensure that safe recruitment procedures are used, including a DBS, Disclosure Scotland or Access NI check where eligible. Volunteers who have not been subject to checks should under no circumstances be allowed to work with children unsupervised.

Volunteer coaches who work with children in schools on a regular basis will be eligible for an enhanced DBS, Disclosure Scotland or Access NI check (including barred list check) as they are taking part in a regulated activity.

Volunteer coaches working with children in a and supervised role will be eligible for a DBS, Disclosure Scotland or Access NI check but this will not include barred information.

Volunteer coaches who will be taking part in one-off or ad hoc activities may not be eligible for a DBS, Disclosure Scotland or Access NI check, so schools will need to do their own risk assessment and exercise professional judgment in deciding what safeguards to put in place. They will need to take into account the nature of the activity and what is known about the volunteer through one-to-one discussions and conversations with school staff, parents or other volunteers.

If it is known that the person volunteers somewhere else, references should be sought to assess their suitability.

As a minimum, the school should make sure the volunteer is supervised by a member of staff at all times and not put in a position where they are left alone with a child.

### **Community and club use of the school sports facilities**

If schools choose to allow community use of their building and facilities for sports activities, a member of the school staff will need to manage how activities are planned and monitored. This will include making sure the safety of the young people involved is treated as a priority and is highlighted as a necessity in the service level agreement. They may wish to ask clubs/ organisations to sign a compliance document.

During the booking process the school will need to work with activity providers to ensure:

- the club/ organisation has safeguarding policies and procedures in place
- there is process for handling and reporting welfare concerns and disclosures
- there is a safeguarding lead for the club/ organisation
- coaches have attended safeguarding training
- they have policies around codes of practice, health and safety and equality
- they understand the importance of sharing information with the schools designated safeguarding lead if welfare concerns arise
- the club has applied a safe recruitment process including references, qualification, identity and DBS, Disclosure Scotland or Access NI checks, where eligible to ensure the suitability of individuals with responsibility for children.
- they have valid public liability insurance
- adequate adult to child ratios will be applied (reflecting relevant NGB guidance)
- they will have be a qualified first aider

- an induction is arranged, to familiarise the club/ activity leader with the venue and share relevant site safety information e.g. fire exits, first aid
- there is a participant register that holds emergency contact details and relevant medical information
- the club has a way of safely managing the late collection of children by parents/ carers to ensure adults are not put in a position where they are left alone with a child.

Schools operating leisure centres on their sites, either during or outside school hours, will need to have operating arrangements in place that include safeguarding policies and procedures to ensure that children are kept safe.

More detailed guidance on community use of school premises for sporting activities is available from the [Sport England](#) website. This includes the CPSU [Partnership check and challenge tool for community use of school sports facilities](#).

### **Useful information**

[CPSU safe sports events management tool](#)

[County Sports Partnerships](#)

[Coaching in schools toolkit](#)

[Employing a coach](#)

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