

Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children 2013

Summary and implications for sports organisations

The new Working Together 2013 guidance is a single 97 page document replacing: Working together to safeguard children (2010), the Framework for the assessment of children in need and their families (2000) and Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (2007).¹

This guidance covers:

- the legislative requirements and expectations on individual services to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; and
- a clear framework for Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) to monitor the effectiveness of local services

Key messages for sport:

- safeguarding is everyone's responsibility
- a child-centred approach is required
- voluntary and private sector providers (including most sports organisations) need to have a range of safeguarding measures in place
- work closely with LSCBs
- paid and volunteer staff need to be aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and how to report concerns.

Organisational safeguarding requirements

These have been reworded but very much reflect those of the earlier Working Together guidance. Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places duties on a range of organisations and individuals to ensure their functions, and any services that they contract out to others, are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. These duties apply to a number of organisations including sport, culture and leisure services.

The revised Working Together document states that 'Voluntary and private sector providers.....should have in place the arrangements described in (Ch 2) paragraph 4 in the same way as organisations in the public sectors' (WT 2013 Ch 2 para 37).

These include:

- a clear line of accountability for commissioning and/or providing safeguarding services for children
- a senior board level safeguarding lead
- a culture of listening to children, including in the development of services

¹ Some of the key changes include:

- LSCBs must publish a threshold document around assessments and service provision
- changes to timelines for undertaking assessments (and removing the need for separate initial and core assessments)
- serious case reviews should be published on the LSCB's website for 12 months
- a local learning and improvement framework to include reviews of cases that do not meet statutory criteria
- LSCBs may use any learning model which is consistent with the principles in this guidance, including the systems methodology recommended by Professor Munro.
- there is no longer any requirement for organisations to undertake Individual Management Reviews (IMRs), although they may still have to submit written information to the reviews
- the creation of a national panel of independent experts on Serious Case Reviews to advise LSCBs about the initiation and publication of SCRs.



- arrangements for information sharing
- a designated safeguarding lead (this role explicitly defined in job description)
- safe recruitment practices, including criminal records checks policies
- supervision and support for staff including safeguarding training, a mandatory induction, and regular reviews
- clear policies to deal with allegations of people who work with children including reporting to the LADO and referral to DBS when appropriate.

Safeguarding

'Safeguarding children - the action we take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm - is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play.' (page 7).

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Effective safeguarding arrangements in every local area should be underpinned by two key principles:

- safeguarding is everyone's responsibility; and
- a child-centred approach.

"Everyone" is described as everyone who works with children, including teachers, GPs, nurses, midwives, health visitors, early years professionals, youth workers, police, Accident and Emergency staff, paediatricians, voluntary and community workers and social workers.

'In order that organisations and practitioners collaborate effectively, it is vital that every individual working with children and families is aware of the role that they have to play and the role of other professionals.' (page 8)

To ensure effective safeguarding arrangements, it is stated that:

- all organisations should have arrangements in place which set out clearly the processes and the principles for sharing information between each other, with other professionals and with the LSCB; and
- no professional should assume that someone else will pass on information which they think may be critical to keeping a child safe. If a professional has concerns about a child's welfare and believes they are suffering or likely to suffer harm, then they should share the information with local authority children's social care.

Structure of the guidance

Most of the responsibilities and procedures in the new 2013 Working Together remain the same as the 2010 guidance, but the guidance is presented in a much more succinct and less detailed way.

Chapter 1: Assessing need and providing help

Contains guidance on: providing early help; information sharing; undertaking assessments under the Children Act 1989; focusing on the needs and views of the child; focusing on outcomes; timeliness of assessments; commencing child protection proceedings (strategy discussion, section 47 enquiries, initial child protection conference, child protection plan, child protection review conference).

Chapter 2: Organisational responsibilities

Contains guidance on: section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children); and additional safeguarding duties placed on schools and colleges, early years and childcare, health services, police, adult social care services, housing authorities, British Transport Police, Prison



Service, Probation Service, secure estate for children, Youth Offending Teams, United Kingdom Border Agency, CAFCASS, armed services, voluntary and private sectors, and faith organisations.

Chapter 3: Local Safeguarding Children Boards

Contains guidance on: statutory objectives and functions of LSCBs; LSCB membership; LSCB chair, accountability and resourcing; and information sharing.

Chapter 4: Learning and improvement framework

Contains guidance on: serious case reviews including requirements around publication; other case reviews; local learning and development framework; a national panel of independent experts on serious case reviews.

Chapter 5: Child death reviews

Contains guidance on: responsibilities of the LSCB; responsibilities of relevant bodies in relation to child deaths; responsibilities of Child Death Overview Panels; definition of preventable child deaths; action by professionals when a child died unexpectedly; involvement of the coroner and pathologist.

Appendix A: Glossary

Includes definitions of: children; safeguarding; types of abuse; young carers.

Appendix B: Statutory framework

Includes legislation relevant to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Appendix C: Further sources of information

Includes list of supplementary guidance on particular safeguarding issues published by: the Department of Education; other government departments and agencies; and non-governmental organisations.

Child Protection processes

Where sport might come into the equation:

- **Referral** – anyone who has concerns about a child’s welfare should make a referral to local authority children’s social care, including any information they have on the child’s developmental needs and the capacity of the child’s parents or carers to meet those needs. The local authority should provide feedback to the referrer on the decisions taken and, where appropriate, this feedback should include the reasons why a case may not meet the statutory threshold to be considered by local authority children’s social care for assessment and suggestions for other sources of more suitable support.
- **Initial Assessment** (Section 17) – this could include contribution to the local authority assessment and provide further information about the child and family, advising on what services could help the child and family and inform local authority children’s social care if any immediate concerns arise.
- **Strategy meeting** – the referrer may be invited to this meeting which takes place whenever there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. This might take the form of a multi-agency meeting or phone calls and more than one discussion may be necessary. A strategy discussion can take place following a referral or at any other time, including during the assessment process.
- **Comprehensive Assessment** (Section 47) – led by the local authority and initiated to decide whether and what type of action is required to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child who is suspected of, or likely to be, suffering significant harm. Agencies working with the child/family may be required to contribute to the assessment, providing information about the child and family.
- **Child protection conferences** – all relevant organisations may contribute to this conference along with family members (and the child where appropriate) to make decisions about the child’s future safety, health and development.
- **Development and delivery of a child protection** – sport may play a role in supporting and strengthening systems to safeguard a child, in liaison with other agencies. If a part of the plan, the sport will also be represented in the planning group and the plan will be reviewed and revised routinely, led by the local authority. The plan will be discontinued when it is assessed that the child



is no longer suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, has moved out of the area (when the plan moves to the new area to be managed) or has reached 18.

LADOs

Each county level and unitary local authority should have a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to be involved in the management and oversight of individual cases where there have been allegations against people working with children. The LADO should provide advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations, liaising with the police and other agencies and monitoring the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly and efficiently as possible. The LADO should also be informed within one working day of all allegations that come to an employer's attention or that are made directly to the police. If an organisation removes an individual (paid worker or unpaid volunteer) from work with children (or would have, had the person not left first) because the person poses a risk of harm to children, the organisation must also make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service. It is an offence to fail to make a referral without good reason.

LSCBs

Local Safeguarding Children's Boards' primary objectives are:

- (a) to coordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area; and
- (b) to ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for those purposes.

The key functions of LSCBs are:

1. developing local safeguarding policies and procedures covering:
 - (i) the action to be taken where there are concerns about a child's safety or welfare, including thresholds for intervention;
 - (ii) training of persons who work with children or in services affecting the safety and welfare of children;
 - (iii) recruitment and supervision of persons who work with children;
 - (iv) investigation of allegations concerning persons who work with children;
 - (v) safety and welfare of children who are privately fostered;
 - (vi) cooperation with neighbouring children's services authorities and their Board partners;
2. communicating the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, raising local awareness of how this can best be done and driving this forward;
3. monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of what is done by the authority and their Board partners individually and collectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and advising them on ways to improve;
4. participating in the planning of services for children in the area of the authority; and
5. undertaking reviews of serious cases and advising the authority and their Board partners on lessons to be learned.

LSCB membership should be drawn from people with a strategic role in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children within their organisation and should include:

- district councils in local government areas which have them;
- the chief officer of police;
- the Local Probation Trust;
- the Youth Offending Team;
- the NHS Commissioning Board and clinical commissioning groups;
- NHS Trusts and NHS Foundation Trusts all or most of whose hospitals, establishments and facilities are situated in the local authority area;
- CAF/CASS;
- the governor or director of any secure training centre in the area of the authority; and
- the governor or director of any prison in the area of the authority which ordinarily detains children.



- two lay members representing the local community.

Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) should maintain a local learning and improvement framework which is shared across local organisations who work with children and families. This framework should enable organisations to be clear about their responsibilities, to learn from experience and improve services as a result.

To download Working Together 2013 visit the [Department for Education website](#).

