



SAFE IN SPORT – GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES

Scottish Pentathlon has a *duty of care* towards all children involved in its activities. Although it is not possible to give guidance for all possible circumstances, these Good Practice Guidelines are based on best practice and cover some of the most common situations. They apply to all young people under the age of 18, but common sense should be applied when considering the circumstances of older children.

Further guidance and support is available from Neil Park, your governing body Lead Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer Tel: 07787 156685.

ADULT TO CHILD RATIOS

The following ratios are recommended in the National Care Standards: Early Education and Childcare up to the Age of 16 (Scottish Executive, 2005). They are a relevant minimum for daytime activities, but should be modified for overnight stays, trips away from home and to take into account other risk factors:

AGE	RATIO
3 and over	1:8
All children over 8yrs	1:10

Activities should be planned to involve *at least* two adults, preferably one male and one female. As a general guide, the following factors will also be taken into consideration in deciding how many adults are required to safely supervise children:

- The number of children involved in the activity
- The age, maturity and experience of the children
- Whether any of the group leaders or children has a disability or special requirements
- Whether any of the children have challenging behaviour
- The particular hazards associated with the activity
- The particular hazards associated with the environment
- The level of qualification and experience of the leaders
- The programme of activities
- Whether there are volunteers under the age 18

FIRST AID AND THE TREATMENT OF INJURIES

Parents/carers must complete a *Partnership with Parents/Carers Form* before their child participates in sport. This ensures that sports volunteers/staff running an event or activity are made aware of any pre-existing medical conditions, or medicines being taken by participants or existing injuries and treatment required.

- Have an accessible and well-resourced first aid kit and a working telephone at the venue.
- Where possible, access to medical advice and/or assistance should be made available.
- Only those with a current, recognised First Aid qualification should treat injuries.
- Inform parents/carers as soon as possible of any injury and action taken.
- A *Concern Recording Form* should be completed if a child sustains a significant injury and the details of any treatment given recorded. Good sense or sport specific guidance should be used to determine which injuries are significant.
- The circumstances of any accidents that occur should be recorded and reviewed to avoid it happening again.

VOLUNTEERS AGED 17 OR UNDER

While some children under the age of 16 may be in 'regulated work' with children they should not be placed in positions of sole responsibility for other children. They should be supervised by a more senior qualified coach or volunteer who has been appropriately vetted.

Volunteers aged 17 and under should be assessed for their suitability to work with children. There is no lower age limit for PVG membership. Where the post meets the 'regulated work' criteria, membership of the PVG Scheme should be considered.

Young volunteers may come under different pressures (e.g. lack of respect from peers) and closeness in age could lead to the development of friendships or romantic/sexual relationships. Regular supervision, training and extra support is recommended. Supervision ratios should also be reassessed, as a young volunteer may not be as capable of overseeing a group of children and young people as an adult in the same position.

PHYSICAL CONTACT

Any necessary physical contact during sport sessions should respect and be sensitive to the needs and wishes of the child and should take place in a culture of dignity and respect. Children should be encouraged to speak out if they feel uncomfortable.

Demonstrating a Technique

In the first instance, techniques should be delivered by demonstration (either by the coach or an athlete who can display the technique safely).

If physical contact is necessary, for example to provide support, this should be clearly explained to the child in advance and he/she should be given the chance to opt out. Physical support should be provided openly and must always be proportionate to the circumstances.

Supporting Child with Personal Care

If it is necessary to help a child with personal care e.g. toileting or changing, this should be agreed in advance with the child and parents/carers and guidance taken. Sports volunteers/staff should work with parents/carers and children to develop practised routines for personal care, such as help with getting changed for younger children, so that parents/carers and children know what to expect.

Helpers should not take on the responsibility for tasks for which they are not appropriately trained e.g. manual assistance for a child with a physical disability.

Administering First Aid

Parents/carers must complete a *Partnership with Parents/Carers Form* to ensure that sports volunteers/staff are made aware of any pre-existing medical conditions, medicines being taken by participants or existing injuries and treatment required. When administering First Aid the child should be told what action is being taken and why. Only those with a current, recognised First Aid qualification should treat injuries and parents/carers should be informed as soon as possible of any injury and action taken. Treatment should be administered in an open environment where ever appropriate, avoiding private or unobserved situations.

SEXUAL ACTIVITY & GROOMING

Within sport intimate relationships can occur. This section looks at both sexual activity among young people and that between adults and young people.

A person in a legally defined 'position of trust' who takes advantage of their position to develop an intimate relationship with a child/young person may be committing a criminal offence known as 'abuse of trust'. Sports coaching is not currently defined in law as a 'position of trust', but the principle of the law should be followed and captured in your club's policies.

The notion of 'positions of trust' applies as much to young people in leadership roles as it does to adults.

Young people

Sexual activity between children/young people at team events, in sports facilities and at social activities organised by the club should be discouraged.

Criminal sexual behaviour committed by a young person should be referred to the police or social services. This may also lead to disciplinary action in accordance with the sport and club's disciplinary procedure.

For more information see the National Guidance on 'Under-age Sexual Activity: Meeting the Needs of Children and Young People and Identifying Child Protection Concerns': <http://www.gov.scot/resource/doc/333495/0108880.pdf>

Adults

Sexual activity between adults and children under the age of 16 is illegal and must be reported to the police.

Sexual activity between adults and young people (aged 16+) involved in sport raise serious issues given the power imbalance in the relationship. Even if a young person is of the age of consent, the power of the adult over that young person may influence their ability to genuinely consent to sexual activity. For example, a coach may have significant power or influence over a young person's sporting career.

Sexual activity between adults and young people (16+) involved in sport should therefore be prohibited when the adult is in a position of trust or authority (coach, trainer, official). This should be communicated clearly to adults in such positions at the outset and clear procedures drawn up to deal with such a situation promptly, fairly and consistently.

Grooming

Most adults involved in sport with children participate with the aim of providing a fun and positive experience for the children taking part. However, some may use sport as a way of gaining access to children with the purpose of developing inappropriate intimate relationships.

People who commit sexual offences against children often first gain the trust of people around the child, such as their family and friends and those involved in sport. Those who commit offences work hard to portray themselves as caring and trustworthy and they befriend their victims to break down barriers before an offence may be committed.

This is referred to as 'grooming'. This predatory behaviour is an offence and may be prosecuted separately to direct sexual abuse. Any suspicions of grooming should be reported to police.

MANAGING CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR

Planning

Sessions should be planned around the group and take into consideration the needs of each child. Sports volunteers/staff should consider previous and likely behaviour. There should be strategies to manage risks agreed in advance. This should identify the appropriate number of adults required to manage and support the session safely, including being able to respond adequately to safeguard the group.

From time to time sports volunteers/staff delivering sport to children may have to deal with challenging behaviour.

The following principles should be applied:

- The wellbeing of all children is the paramount consideration.
- Children must never be subject to any form of treatment that is harmful, abusive, humiliating or degrading and should always be able to maintain their respect and dignity.
- No member of staff should attempt to respond to challenging behaviour by using techniques for which they have not been trained.

None of the following should be used as a means of managing a child's behaviour:

- Physical punishment or the threat of such.
- Withdrawal of communication.
- Being deprived of food, water or access to changing facilities or toilets.
- Verbal intimidation, ridicule or humiliation.

Physical Interventions

Physical interventions should only be used as a last resort to prevent a child from injuring themselves or others or causing serious damage to property. **Only the minimum force needed to avert injury to a person or serious damage to property should be used and applied for the shortest period of time.** Physical intervention must not ever be used as a form of punishment.

TRANSPORTING CHILDREN

Clubs do not generally take responsibility for the transport of players to and from venues. If the club does expressly accept responsibility for travel arrangements, it should undertake a risk assessment including the following areas:

- All vehicles and drivers are correctly insured.
- The driver has a valid and appropriate license.
- All reasonable safety measures are available e.g. fitted, working seatbelts or booster seats.
- There is an appropriate ratio of adults per child.
- Drivers take adequate breaks.
- If an adult is regularly transporting children on behalf of the club this may be regulated work with children as such it should be assessed whether or not this person requires a PVG check

Sports volunteers/staff should be discouraged from transporting children to activities by car. However, when this situation cannot be avoided the following guidelines should be followed:

- Request parent/carer consent in advance and provide details of the journey.
- Take all reasonable safety measures e.g. children in the back seat, seatbelts worn.
- Where possible, have another adult accompany you on the journey.

COLLECTION BY PARENTS/CARERS

Make sure that start and finish times are clear and that the arrangements for collection are understood by all. Parents/carers who wish children to go home unaccompanied (according to their age and stage) should give consent in writing. Notify parents/carers that they should not drop children off too early and that they are expected to collect children promptly. Explain late collection procedures.

Have a late collection telephone contact and number on the *Partnership with Parents/Carers Form* and let the parent/carer know how to contact the club if they are held up.

Dealing with the situation

If parents/carers are late when picking up their child, the wellbeing of the child will take precedence, and he/she must not be left alone. The leaders and coaches have a duty of care to the children in their charge and this continues when the activity has finished. However, it is not the responsibility of staff/volunteers to transport children home. If attempts to contact an adult who is responsible for the child fail, the CWPO and social work should be informed.

Where possible have more than one adult/leader to lock up at the end of an activity. If an adult is left in sole charge in these circumstances, they should record any actions taken and inform the CWPO and parents/carers as soon as possible.

TRIPS AWAY FROM HOME (INVOLVING OVERNIGHT STAYS)

Designate a CWPO for the Trip and a Home Contact person.

The CWPO should act as the main contact for dealing with concerns about the safety and wellbeing of children whilst away from home. Children and parents or carers should be given a detailed itinerary and should be informed of the CWPO contact details and arrangements for handling concerns.

There should be procedures in place to manage an emergency situation, this should include the appointment of a Home Contact person who would be the main point of contact for coaches and parents/carers.

Risk Assessment

Potential areas of risk should be identified at the planning stage and safeguards should be put in place to manage them. Risk assessment should be an on-going process throughout the trip.

Travel Arrangements

If the trip involves travel abroad, ensure that those in charge are aware of local emergency procedures and how to deal with concerns about the wellbeing of children. Children and adults should be informed of any local customs.

Adult to Child Ratios

Trips should be planned to involve *at least* two adults, (preferably one male and one female). See the guidelines on adult to child ratios to assess the numbers of adults required to supervise the group safely.

Adults responsible for managing the trip should be recruited and selected using the procedure for recruitment and selection of sports volunteers/staff in regulated work with children. All adults should sign up to the child protection policy, procedures and code of conduct.

Accommodation

Find out as much as possible in advance about the venue/accommodation – wherever possible, a visit is useful.

Check the health & safety of any accommodation and the security and suitability of sleeping arrangements to allow supervision and access in case of emergency.

Sharing arrangements should be appropriate in terms of age and gender and parents/carers and children should be consulted in advance about arrangements where possible.

Exchange Visits/Hosting

Before departure, make sure there is a shared understanding of the standards expected during home stays between the club, host organisation/families, parents/carers and children themselves. Put in place arrangements for the supervision of children during the visit.

When a club is assigning a host family they should be appropriately vetted utilising the PVG Scheme or equivalent police checks and references thoroughly checked. Organisers, parents/carers and children should all be provided with a copy of emergency contact numbers.

Children should be aware of who they can talk to if problems arise during the visit. Daily contact should be made with all children by the group leader to ensure they are safe and well.

Facility checklist

Facilities should:

- Be appropriately licensed
- Have adequate and relevant insurance cover
- Have a policy on the protection of children
- Have Health and Safety policy and procedures
- Have adequate security arrangements
- Have staff that are vetted, qualified and trained

Involving Parents/Carers

A meeting with parents/carers to share information about the trip, answer questions and make joint decisions is recommended. A Code of Conduct with consequences for unacceptable behaviour should be agreed in advance.

Parents/carers must complete a partnership with parents/carers form and provide emergency contact details.

In the event of an emergency at home during the trip, parents/carers should be encouraged to make contact with the group leaders in the first instance so that arrangements can be put in to place to support the child.

Free time

Organisers must ensure that arrangements are in place for the supervision and risk assessment of activities during free time. Children must not be allowed to wander alone in unfamiliar places.

During the trip

Group leaders should have clear roles and responsibilities. They should not be over familiar with children and must remember that they are in a position of trust at all times.

The use of alcohol and/or drugs or engaging in sexual relationships (between two young people) should not be allowed, even if the local legislation relating to these behaviours is more lenient than in Scotland.

Group leaders should keep an overview of the wellbeing of all children and try to identify issues early on to resolve them quickly. Children can be encouraged to participate in this process. For example, by taking turns to complete a daily diary as a way for them to communicate (both positive and negative) things that they want the group leaders to know.

After the Trip

It is recommended that everyone involved in the trip, including the children, takes part in a debrief to reflect on what went well, not so well and what could be done differently next time.

Please also see *Safe Sport Events, Activities and Competitions*, published by the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit for further guidance: <https://thecpsu.org.uk/resource-library/2013/safe-sport-events-activities-and-competitions/>

PROCEDURE FOR THE USE OF PHOTOGRAPHS, FILM, VIDEO

Children must be protected from those who would seek to use photos and videos to place them at risk of harm.

Written consent must be obtained from the child's parents/carers before any photography or filming takes place.

MANAGEMENT OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Reasonable steps must be taken to promote the safe use of photography and filming at events and activities. It is not possible to prevent individuals photographing or filming in public places, but the club does have the right to prohibit the use of photography, film or video at its own events or activities at a private venue.

Where photography or filming is permitted, (and consent has been granted from parents/carers), the following guidelines should be followed:

- Put a system in place to allow easy tracking of photographers and their equipment. For example use a badge or sticker to identify those with permission to photograph or film.
- Children must never be portrayed in a demeaning, tasteless or a provocative manner. Children should never be shown in a state of partial undress, other than when depicting an action shot within the context of the sport. Attire such as tracksuits or t-shirts may be more appropriate.
- No unsupervised access or one-to-one sessions will be allowed unless this has been explicitly agreed with the child and parents/carers.
- Decisions about publishing images should reflect the best interests of the child and should consider whether they might place the child at risk. Special care must be taken in relation to vulnerable children such as those in care, fleeing domestic violence or a child with a disability.
- All negatives, copies of videos and digital images will be stored in a secure place. These will not be kept for any longer than is necessary having regard to the purposes for which they were taken.
- Indecent images of young people under 18 years of age are classified as child abuse imagery and must be reported immediately to the police.

MOBILE PHONE CAMERAS

A number of children have been placed at risk as a result of the ability to discreetly record and transmit images through mobile phones. Particular care is required in areas where personal privacy is important e.g. changing rooms, bathrooms and sleeping quarters. No photographs or filming should ever be permitted in such areas.

CONCERNS

Anyone behaving in a way which could reasonably be viewed as inappropriate in relation to filming or photographing should be reported to the Club Child Wellbeing & Protection Officer, or the police.

Communication technology and social media developments advance extremely quickly, meaning ways in which we communicate and receive and absorb information are changing all the time. This provides a great opportunity for clubs to promote their activities and communicate easily with members. But it can also put children and young people at considerable risk, which is why safeguards must be put in place.

Adults who seek to harm children have been known to use technology and social media to “groom” children. This area is now specifically addressed by the Protection of Children and Prevention of Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2005. It is also widely acknowledged that children can be harmed by the behaviours and actions of their peers for example, on-line bullying and sexting.

The following guidelines should be met in order to safeguard all parties when communicating using texting/social media:

- all communications from the club with children should be open, transparent and appropriate
- messages should only be sent to communicate details of meeting points, training, match details, competition results etc. The same message should be sent to every member of the group/team
- it should always be clear that it is the club who is communicating information – one-to-one messaging arrangements between sports volunteers/staff should be strongly discouraged and safeguards should be in place and settings adjusted to prevent this happening
- messages should never contain any offensive, abusive or inappropriate language. They should not be open to misinterpretation
- written permission must be sought from parents/carers to communicate with children under 16 years via technology/social media
- parents should be offered the option to be copied in to any messages their child will be sent
- consent to communicate via technology/social media should be sought directly from young people aged 16 to 18. Though consent from parents/carers is not required for this age group it is recommended that parents/carers are informed of the intention to communicate with their children
- children and young people should be informed about the means of communication at the club. They should also be given information on how to keep themselves safe and who to report any concerns to in the [Club’s Name]
- All concerns about the inappropriate use of technology and social media will be dealt with in line with the Procedure for *Responding to Concerns about a Child*. This may include the concerns being reported to police
- All phone numbers/email addresses of children and young people should be recorded and kept securely in a locked cabinet or password-protected electronic file or database
- The number of people with access to children and young people’s details should be kept to a practical minimum. A record should be kept of their numbers/addresses by the Club Child Wellbeing & Protection Officer

Hub Websites/Social Media Sites

Websites/Social Media sites provide an opportunity for a club to extend their community profile, advertise and communicate easily with their members. Thought should be given to consent, tone and how sites and pages will be monitored. In terms of publishing information and pictures the following good practice should be noted:

Permission

- Written parent/carer consent must be obtained for all children aged under 16 before publishing any information or pictures of a child. If the material is changed from the time of consent, the parents/carers must be informed and consent provided for the changes.
- Special care must be taken in relation to vulnerable children e.g. child fleeing domestic violence or a child with a disability, and consideration given to whether publication would place the child at risk.

- Young athletes who have a public profile as a result of their achievements are entitled to the same protection as all other children. In these cases, common sense is required when implementing these guidelines. All decisions should reflect the best interests of the child.

Use of Images and Information

- Information published on the websites/social networking sites must never include personal information that could identify a child e.g. home address, email address, telephone number of a child. All contact must be directed to [Club Name]. Credit for achievements by a child should be restricted to first names e.g. Tracey was Player of the Year 2002.
- Children must never be portrayed in a demeaning, tasteless or a provocative manner. Children should never be portrayed in a state of partial undress, other than when depicting an action shot within the context of the sport. Attire such as tracksuits or t-shirts may be more appropriate.
- Information about specific events or meetings e.g. coaching sessions must not be distributed to any individuals other than to those directly concerned.

Forums

Where a site allows for two way communication between the organisation and members close monitoring is required. From time to time forums can be used to target individuals or to engage contributors in debates that can cause upset and embarrassment to children and young people.

Coaches, member of staff or volunteer should refrain from being drawn into debates concerning selection, performance or personalities – even where the subject of discussion is anonymous.

Any offending comments should be removed by the club and appropriate procedures should be used to address poor practice or Code of Conduct breaches.

Concerns

Any concerns or enquiries should be reported to [Club Name] Child Wellbeing & Protection Officer.

For more information on the use of social media please access Safeguarding in Sports 'Social Media Guidelines for Sport Coaches, Volunteers and Athletes' at: <http://www.children1st.org.uk/what-we-do/how-we-help/safeguarding-in-sport/safeguarding-in-sport-resources/>

CLUBHOUSES AND CHANGING ROOMS

Children are particularly vulnerable in the changing area of sports facilities

Bullying can occur where children are left unsupervised in changing areas. It is recommended that particular attention is given to the supervision of children aged 10 and under in changing rooms.

Adults should avoid changing or showering at the same time as children. If limited changing facilities mean that adults and children must share, adults must take care to protect the modesty and privacy of themselves and the children. Parents/carers should be made aware if this is likely to be the case.

An adult should not be alone with a child in the changing areas. If possible more than one adult should supervise changing areas. Extra vigilance may also be required if there is public access to the venue.

If children are uncomfortable changing or showering in public, do not pressure them to do so.

If you need to use a changing room for another purpose, such as a team talk, wait until all children are fully dressed. No photography or filming should be allowed in changing areas.