

The Child Safeguarding Practice Review and Relevant Agency (England) Regulations 2018

Information for sports organisations

This note has been prepared by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport in liaison with the Department for Education to highlight the new aspects of the *Working Together to Safeguard Children: a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children* statutory guidance (published on 4th July 2018) which have implications for sports organisations.¹

This note does not constitute, or replace, statutory guidance. It is intended to provide additional information for sports organisations.

Q&A for sports organisations

Q. Which new aspects of *Working Together* affect sports organisations?

A. Sports organisations have been included in this guidance for the first time, to reflect the importance of these organisations in safeguarding children.

All sports organisations continue to have duties under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004, 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. This has not changed.

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 (“the Act”) replaces Local Safeguarding Children Boards with new local safeguarding arrangements, led by three safeguarding partners (local authorities, chief officers of police, and clinical commissioning groups).

The Act places a duty on these safeguarding partners to make arrangements for themselves and any relevant agencies they deem appropriate to work together for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in their area. Sports organisations are listed as a relevant agency. This is new.

Q. What are relevant agencies, and why are sports organisations included?

A. Relevant agencies are organisations which can be called upon by the safeguarding partners in a local area to join their formal arrangements. The safeguarding partners will consider which relevant agencies to include in their arrangements, based on an assessment of local needs and risks.

The Department for Education’s consultation on the new *Working Together* guidance in Autumn 2017 included draft regulations which provided a list of suggested relevant

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

agencies. During this exercise, government received feedback that sports organisations should be included. As a result, the ‘Child Safeguarding Practice Review and Relevant Agency (England) Regulations 2018’ lists “Any person or body involved in the provision, supervision or oversight of sport or leisure” as a relevant agency.

Inclusion on the list of relevant agencies in regulations does not mean that an organisation will automatically be approached by the safeguarding partners. In addition to being listed in regulations, a relevant agency must also exercise functions in the local area in relation to children.

Q. What does this mean for sports organisations?

A. Sports organisations which exercise functions in relation to children may be asked to join local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. If you are asked to join local arrangements, you have a duty to cooperate.

Q: As a small, local club are these new regulations relevant to me at all?

A: Yes. In addition to complying with any NGB safeguarding requirements, your club should also ensure that its safeguarding arrangements and procedures reflect the relevant local safeguarding arrangements.

For example, in the event that safeguarding cases or issues arise within your (or another) sports club, the local safeguarding partners might develop measures which you will be required to contribute to or comply with.

Q: What kind of sports organisations are likely to receive requests to become ‘relevant agencies’? We are a small, volunteer-led sports club – are we likely to be involved?

A: Relevant agencies are selected to assist local safeguarding partners in their duty to ensure that adequate arrangements are in place to safeguard children across the full range of sectors and settings, including sport and leisure.

This is likely to involve organisations large enough to support strategic plans and developments, such as County Sports Partnerships or leisure providers. It is unlikely that a local sports club would be asked to become a relevant agency, but it is possible.

Any safeguarding arrangements implemented locally will apply to any context which involves the provision of services for children – including small local sports clubs.

Q. What will happen if my organisation is chosen as a relevant agency?

A. The lead partners will consult with you to make sure their expectations of your involvement in the local arrangements take account of the nature and circumstances of your organisation. These discussions may cover topics such as attendance at meetings and whether a financial contribution to local safeguarding arrangements is

required. In each case, the lead partners will ensure that any requests made of relevant agencies are proportionate and fair.

Q. What if I'm a volunteer, or my organisation has limited safeguarding expertise?

A. We suggest that you discuss this with the safeguarding partners when they consult with you. You may wish to explore whether a safeguarding representative from your National Governing Body or County Sports Partnership (for example) can join the arrangements in your place, or alongside you.

Q. Where can I go for more information?

A. *Working Together* explains the context for these regulations and how multi-agency safeguarding arrangements will work. If you have any questions about the *Working Together* guidance, please contact your Local Authority Designated Officer or the Department for Education.

Sports clubs and local organisations may wish to contact their National Governing Body or local County Sports Partnership for advice if they are approached to be a relevant agency.