



MSP

UNLOCKING THE POWER
OF SPORT & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

MSP Policy Statement for Respecting, Safeguarding and Protecting Children, Young People & Adults at Risk in Sport and Physical Activity 2017-2022

MSP recognises the safety, welfare and well-being of children¹, young people & adults at risk² is without exception our primary concern. We are committed to ensuring that regardless of age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief or sexual identity they have the right to be safeguarded and protected from any forms of abuse, harm, mistreatment or neglect.

Not only are MSP committed to ensuring that children, young people & adults at risk have the right to be safeguarded and protected, we are equally committed to ensuring they have the fundamental right to be respected, to be listened to, have their views heard and to ensure that they are taken seriously³, at all times.

MSP recognise that it is everyone's responsibility to ensure any concerns which relate to the safety, welfare and well-being of all our children, young people and adults at risk should be highlighted and challenged. All incidents of suspicious or poor practice, allegations of abuse or mistreatment raised, or issues where the well-being of a child, young person or adult is in anyway perceived to be put at risk, will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately⁴. Furthermore, we are committed to ensuring that every effort is made across the Partnership, sport and the wider community towards the adoption of best practice in relation to respecting, safeguarding, and protecting children, young people & adults at risk in Merseyside.

¹ A child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. 'Children' therefore means 'children and young people' throughout. The fact that a child is reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate for children and young does not change his / her status or entitlement to services or protection'. (Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2015 – Chapter 1, Footnote Page 5, Glossary Page 92)

² MSP adopts the definition of adults at risk as outlined by the Anne Craft Trust:
<http://www.anncrafttrust.org/docs/04%20Safeguarding%20Adults%20at%20Risk%20Definition.pdf>

³ In making this commitment, MSP are specifically adopting the fundamental principle of "A Child-Centred Approach" - as outlined in Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2015 – and expanding the premise to include the application to include adults at risk. (Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2015, Introduction, Paragraphs 14-23, Pages 8-11)

⁴ In the first instance, MSP will specifically refer the initial concern to the appropriate statutory agencies responsible for providing children's or adult services for review and action. Where a concern or allegation relates to the specific actions or behaviour of an adult, such as a coach, MSP will ensure that the matter is both referred to the appropriate statutory agency for children's or adult services and to the respective employing body. This referral mechanism is set out within MSPs Safeguarding & Protecting Children, Young People and Adults at Risk, Policy and Procedures, Update: September 2017.

MSP – through its Advisory Board and Core Team - will:

- Accept the moral and legal responsibility to implement policies and procedures⁵ to provide a duty of care for children, young people & adults at risk, safeguard their well-being and protect them from any form of abuse, harm, mistreatment or neglect.
- Respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of children, young people and adults at risk, at all times.
- Ensure that children, young people and adults at risk have the right to be listened to and have their views heard at all times.
- Promote understanding and recognition that children, young people and adults from particular groups⁶ may be more vulnerable to abuse, harm, mistreatment or neglect. Work to ensure that where appropriate safeguards are implemented these recognised the additional vulnerability which may arise.
- In-line with our Equality and Diversity Policy and in recognition of the particular challenges which children, young people and adults at risk face - from specific groups or communities⁷ - work with partners at a local, regional or national level to address barriers that may exist to ensure equality of access to sporting and physical activity opportunities for all.
- Ensuring that policies and procedures for safeguarding, protecting, promoting and recognising the needs of children, young people and adults at risk are integral to and embedded within the realisation of all our Strategic Outcomes.
- Take responsibility for actively promoting across the Partnership, sport and the wider community the overriding principal that the safety, welfare and well-being of children, young people & adults at risk is, without exception, paramount.
- Actively work to support our partners and other organisations, recognise and understand their own moral and legal responsibilities in relation all aspects concerning respecting, safeguarding and protecting.
- To advocate and encourage the adoption of best practice in terms their own policies, procedures and practices relating to children, young people & adults at risk.
- Take responsibility for advocating across the Partnership, sport and the wider community the fundamental right that children, young people & adults at risk should be respected, have their views taken seriously and acted upon. To advocate and work with partners and other organisations to encourage the adoption of best practice in relation to ensuring that children, young people & adults at risk are listened to and have their views heard.
- Ensure appropriate resources are made available to specifically support the realisation of these commitments and enable the MSP Core Team to address identified or agreed development priorities.
- Identify agreed development priorities for the MSP Core Team within MSPs Safeguarding & Protection Children and Young People Action & Implementation Plan.
- Detail agreed development priorities for the MSP Core Team within MSPs Safeguarding & Protecting Adults at Risk Action & Implementation Plan.

⁵ These procedures not only cover the events, activities or programmes which are directly delivered by the MSP Core Team they are also designed to provide a framework to specifically enable the Core Team to appropriately handle any concerns, allegations or issues, raised by young people, their parents, carers, guardians or those providing sporting opportunities at any time. This policy commitment and procedures is based on the requirements for inter-agency working originally embedded within Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2006. Reference: MSP, Safeguarding & Protecting Children, Young People and Adults at Risk, Policy and Procedures, Update: September 2017.

⁶ Some groups of children and young people may be particularly vulnerable due to specific circumstances or background: these are defined within Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2015 – Identifying Children and Families Who Would Benefit From Additional Help Chapter 1, Paragraph 5, Page 13.

⁷ In addition to the protected characteristics - as detailed in the Equality Act 2010 (age; disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation), MSP recognises that specific groups or communities may also be disadvantaged due to their economic or social circumstances or offending history.

- Provide information and assistance to partners and other organisations in order to identify and access appropriate support and resources – local, regional or national - in order to contribute to realising this policy commitment across the Partnership.
- Recruit, train and supervise its employees and volunteers to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect children, young people & adults at risk from any form of abuse, harm or mistreatment and themselves against false allegations.⁸
- Ensure that MSP Core Team staff and volunteers adopt and abide by the commitments outlined in this statement and procedures which underpin this, at all times.
- Respond to any allegations, concerns or issues raised appropriately and as a matter of priority. Implement the appropriate procedure for handling the specific allegation, or issue, and ensure that actions are taken to address and resolve it to the satisfaction of all concerned as quickly as possible.⁹
- Implement, maintain and continue to embed nationally recognised standards and specific guidance - advocated by the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit, Anne Craft Trust and Sport England – for respecting, safeguarding, protecting and promoting the safety, welfare and well-being of children, young people and adults at risk within the MSP Core Team.
- Engage with the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit and Anne Craft Trust to support both partners organisations to realise their objectives.
- Present this policy statement for review and endorsement annually by the MSP Advisory Board. Proposed amendments to ensure this policy reflects current legislation or policy relating to children, young people or adults at risk will be presented for review by the Board – as and when specific changes are required or as part of the annual review, whichever comes first.
- Conduct a progress review of MSPs Safeguarding & Protection Children and Young People Action & Implementation on a six-month basis. Review to be undertaken by the Compliance, Scrutiny & Nominations Group and the Executive Director. The plan will be updated by the Lead Child Protection Officer and the Executive Director, in advance of the review.
- Review supporting procedures on a six-month basis to ensure they remain fit for purpose will be reviewed by the Lead Child Protection Officer and the Executive Director.
- The policy statement, action and implementation plans and supporting procedures will remain in force until amended, replaced or withdrawn.

MSPs commitment to respecting, safeguarding, protecting children, young people and adults at risk is fully supported and endorsed by on behalf of the MSP Advisory Board as part of the Governance Framework 2017-2022.

⁸ It is MSPs aspiration to not only ensure compliance with statutory requirements but to promote the adoption of best practice relating to respecting, safeguarding and protecting in terms of recruitment, training and supervision not only across the Partnership but within the wider community. It is noted that members of the MSP Core Team, and any volunteers working directly for the Core Team, are subject to the policies and procedures of Liverpool City Council.

⁹ At all times where an issue or concern is initially raised directly with the MSP Core Team these will be referred to the statutory agencies in the Partnership and other external organisations to ensure a swift and appropriate resolution. Reference: MSP, Safeguarding & Protecting Children, Young People and Adults at Risk, Policy and Procedures, Update: September 2017.