



Safeguarding Children **at Sporting Events** at Licensed Premises



Information for
Sports Clubs

Children SHEFFIELD
Safeguarding Partnership



**Yorkshire
Sport
Foundation**



This leaflet is a guide for sports club management committees and their event organisers, to help them manage sports events/functions in a way that's safe and suitable for children, particularly if alcohol is on sale.



If you use a premises that's licensed under the 2003 Licensing Act to hold sports activities (such as pubs, social clubs and some leisure centres) to hold training sessions, competitions, end of season presentation nights or fundraising functions, the premises manager has a legal responsibility to make sure systems are in place to protect children from physical, moral and psychological harm¹. This is so that children may participate in activities and benefit from the facilities in a safe and enjoyable way. The venues you choose may have alcohol on sale, or offer other 'licensable activities'.

In South Yorkshire, many licensees already have effective safeguarding systems operating to make sure the environment remains family friendly, so that children and young people involved in sports events can learn to socialise, integrate and (when of an appropriate age) drink responsibly. Some premises have dedicated child welfare staff, known as 'safeguarding co-ordinators'. These measures may be a legal condition of their premises licence, so it's important that you are aware of and compliant with the child protection policies operating at the premises.

What are the potential risks at junior sports events and functions?

The risks will vary, depending on the type of activities taking place, the setting, and the audience attending. For example, if you're running training sessions attended by children and supervised by qualified coaches, the risks may be lower than if you're organising an end of season function, where alcohol is on sale and families attend the party.

Here are some circumstances that may put your players, or other children attending, at risk of physical, psychological or moral harm¹:

- ▶ Children exposed to inappropriate behaviour (including strong or offensive language, shouting, swearing, bullying, verbal abuse, criticism)
- ▶ Children exposed to dangerous adult behaviour (including adults who are intoxicated, violent or aggressive)
- ▶ Indecent exposure / urinating in public
- ▶ Accidental harm (for example from discarded drinks containers, broken glass)
- ▶ Children buying or consuming alcohol
- ▶ Proxy purchase (adults/friends buying alcohol for under 18's)
- ▶ Adults failing to supervise children
- ▶ Unsuitable adults supervising children
- ▶ Children accessing gambling or gaming machines which are for adult use only.

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In South Yorkshire, many licensees already have effective safeguarding systems operating to make sure the environment remains family friendly, so that children involved in junior sports events can learn to socialise.

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How should risk be managed?

It is recommended that you discuss the potential risks with the venue manager at the time you book the event at their premises and ask what policies they have in place to protect children. You may be asked to agree to comply with the following systems and this agreement may form part of your booking contract with the premises manager. Demonstrating that safeguarding measures operate at the premises should reassure the parents/carers and your club's management committee, that the premises is a suitable venue.

Here's a checklist of questions you could ask to ensure adequate risk management systems are in place during your club events/functions:



- ▶ Is it policy that children must be supervised at all times (by qualified or authorised persons eg club staff or parents/carers)?
- ▶ Are the changing facilities appropriate for the event?
- ▶ Are toilet facilities available and clearly signposted?
- ▶ Are sport activity areas cordoned off and must spectators remain behind the boundary?
- ▶ Are there signs to ask guests to behave responsibly in compliance with the code of conduct and with The Children's Charter (a copy of this should be provided to you at the point of booking and you should inform all guests/club members that they must comply)
- ▶ Does the booking contract for the event/function state that if a club member or club guest fails to behave responsibly, this may result in: the termination of the event without refund; or, financial penalties being charged to the sports club; or, the sport governing body will be notified if the club or its guests engage in unacceptable standards of behaviour. How will you comply with the booking conditions?
- ▶ Is there a policy that alcohol should only be consumed in designated areas?
- ▶ Are the premises staff trained to:
 - ▼ Operate a proof of age scheme
 - ▼ Make refusals for alcohol sales if a person appears to be intoxicated or under the age of 18
 - ▼ Manage confrontation
 - ▼ Be vigilant for proxy purchase
 - ▼ Understand the law in relation to alcohol
 - ▼ Maintain a refusals log and incidents log
 - ▼ Recognise and report safeguarding concerns
- ▶ Will there be at least one member of the premises staff assigned to the child welfare role of 'safeguarding co-ordinator' (a description of this role is available from the Sheffield Childrens Safeguarding Partnership). Will this person be on site during the events/function?
- ▶ Do staff routinely monitor the premises and outside areas by regularly patrolling/toilet checks
- ▶ If the person(s) providing the entertainment is not appropriately DBS checked or qualified and insured to supervise children, is it policy that adults remain with children to supervise them during entertainment activities (such as bouncy castles or other play activities)?
- ▶ Is adult entertainment (such as blue comedians, striptease, or adult gambling activities) prohibited during children's events/functions?
- ▶ Is there prominent display of signage to highlight:
 - ▼ Adults must supervise their children/comply with the Children's Charter
 - ▼ Designated drinking areas
 - ▼ Restricted access areas (for example, changing facilities)

- ▼ Toilet facilities
- ▼ Named 'safeguarding co-ordinator'
- ▼ A proof of age scheme

- ▶ Are polycarbonate drinks containers used in outside designated drinking areas?
- ▶ Does the premises management use sanctions against irresponsible adults?
- ▶ Club should clarify with parents/carers before the event who will have responsibility for supervising children throughout their time at the facility

It's best practice for the premises management to do a risk assessment prior to each event/function - ask the venue manager to provide you with a copy of their written risk assessment, prior to the event. This could be retained on your club files, as a record to demonstrate that you have shown due diligence towards child safety at your event/function, should a situation arise regarding the safety of a child.

Your management committee should also promote best practice by encouraging parents/carers to adhere to your Code of Conduct and explaining at parent/carer induction meetings, the importance of adults behaving in a safe and acceptable way at junior sporting events.

Useful Contacts



Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership

Contact the Safeguarding Licensing Manager at:

SCSPsafeguardinglicensing@sheffield.gov.uk

T: 0114 2736753

W: www.safeguardingsheffieldchildren.org



NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit

www.thecpsu.org.uk



Sheffield & Hallamshire Football Association

County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer

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Yorkshire Sport Foundation

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If you are concerned about a child or young person contact the safeguarding hub 0114 273 4855 (24 Hours)