

4. Know the responsibilities of those who work with children to safeguard and promote their welfare, and strategies for safeguarding children, young people and self

4.1 Safeguarding children and young people

The government produced a document called 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2006) and this outlines how organisations and individuals should work together to safeguard children and young people and promote their welfare. The following components are key elements:

- Protecting children and young people from abuse and neglect
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances and conditions that are classed as effective care
- Giving children and young people the best chances in life to develop as a person and become an adult.

There are a number of different strategies that ensure that children and young people are safeguarded. The following sections introduce you to these strategies but be aware that legislation, policies and procedures

change regularly so ensure that you are using the version that is most relevant to your work.

Awareness of disclosure procedures

The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) was set up to improve access to criminal records for employment and voluntary work purposes. The CRB provides this access through a process called disclosure. Disclosure is a process whereby individuals are checked for their suitability to work with children or young people. There were originally three levels of disclosure: basic, standard and enhanced (see Table 24.2) although the basic level was never introduced.

When a disclosure is issued, a copy will be given to the applicant and the organisation/employer. The organisation must ensure that all information is kept confidential. For more information regarding the CRB check, visit www.crb.homeoffice.gov.uk.

Empowering children and young people

When in your care, children and young people should feel empowered. This means that they should feel confident in their ability to come and speak to you

Table 24.2: The three levels of disclosure.

Level of disclosure	What happens?	Who is it suitable for?
Basic	Check of unspent convictions	Those working in a position that will bring them into indirect contact with children or young people
Standard	Check of all convictions, cautions or warnings held on the police national computer, plus information held by Department for Children, Schools and Families under section 142 of the Education Act on those considered unsuitable for, and banned from, working with children. Check of information from the Protection of Children Act list and information from the Protection of Vulnerable Adults list.	Those working in direct contact with children and young people that are always under direct supervision of a senior member of staff
Enhanced	Everything included above, plus local police force records (including non-conviction information considered relevant by chief police officers)	Any individuals in significant direct contact with children or young people

about anything without feeling that they will be judged. Having empowered children and young people is vital for developing a good working relationship and can help if you suspect cases of neglect or abuse as they are more likely to tell you.

Unconditional acceptance of the child/young person

All children and young people should be treated equally, regardless of race, gender, socio-economic background, sexual orientation, religious opinion or disabilities. When working with young children, you must accept them unconditionally and offer them opportunities to develop through sport. You should challenge any form of discrimination.

Building self-esteem, assertiveness, self-confidence and reliance

Participation in sport helps children and young people to develop key aspects of their character. Importantly, sport and physical activity has been shown to positively benefit the mental health of children and young people. To help children to develop you could:

- provide children and young people with choices about the types of activities in the session
- treat children and young people as individuals
- encourage children and young people to talk with teachers and coaches about their performance
- help children and young people to develop a well-balanced lifestyle
- encourage children and young people to make their own decisions.

Ensuring children and young people are aware of procedures in case of accidents, illness and emergency

Make sure that all children or young people are aware of any procedures in case of accidents, illness or emergency. These could be particularly important if you are the person that has been injured and a child or young person has to find help for you.

Injuries, illness and other emergencies

If a child or young person is accidentally hurt, is injured or becomes ill while they are under your supervision or care, you should report the incident as soon as possible to your senior member of staff.

4.2 Legislation, policies and procedures

Key legislation can influence, in some way, who can work with children and young people and how they can work with them. The acts are listed below.

- The Children Act (1989)
- The Protection of Children Act (1999)
- Care Standards Act (2000)
- Every Child Matters and the Children Act (2004)
- The Childcare Act (2006)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)

The NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit has published standards for safeguarding and protecting children in sport. In addition, they have also published a guidance document entitled 'Roles, Skills, Knowledge and Competencies for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in the Sport Sector'; it is designed to be used by everybody working with children and young people in sport. These documents will be useful for you when understanding the different requirements as they are based on good practice, legislation and research from different sports settings and can be downloaded from www.nspcc.org.uk.

National and local

Safeguarding children is the responsibility of everybody who works with them. The 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2006) document is a key national initiative in place to safeguard children and young people (you can find this document at www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters). This programme is controlled on a local level by Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB). A LSCB is made up of Local Authorities (LA), health bodies, the police and other bodies such as schools and colleges.

Relating to lines of reporting

While there is a grey area relating to reporting child protection issues in the UK, the Children Act 1989 and 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2006) do have recommendations relating to the responsibility of adults working with children or young people. If you are working with children or young people, it is your responsibility to report your concerns to the child protection officer in your organisation. A lot of sports clubs have child protection officers, so they should be your first point of contact.

Whistle blowing

If you suspect that a colleague is acting inappropriately with a child or young person with whom they are working, you should report this to the appropriate individual in the organisation (for example, your manager or the child protection officer).

Child protection

Child protection is used to protect children and young people who are suffering, or who are at risk from, harm. There is legislation relating to child protection. The current child protection system for the UK is based on the Children Act (1989). This act introduced the paramount principle which means that a child's welfare is of paramount importance, and it introduced parental responsibility into legislation which sets out the rights, duties, powers and responsibilities of the parent or carer of the child. After the Children Act, the Education Act (2002) was introduced which requires school governing bodies, local education authorities and further education institutions to ensure that they safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Health, safety, security and hygiene

There is important legislation that governs health, safety, security and hygiene when working in sports environments including Health and Safety at Work Act (1974), Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) and Personal Protective Equipment (2002). You should look at the work you have done in Student Book 1, Unit 3 Assessing risk in sport for more details about the different legislation.

4.3 Safeguarding self

When you are working with young people, you need to think about safeguarding yourself. In this section you will look at what you need to understand to make sure you work appropriately with young people, which will mean that you safeguard yourself.

Take it further

NSPCC

Organisations such as the NSPCC have resources that will help you to understand what constitutes working appropriately to safeguard young people. Go to the NSPCC website and watch their videos on working appropriately with young people.

Guidelines

Guidelines have been produced by different bodies focusing on safeguarding children. These guidelines are available through the 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' document, and through specialist workshops offered through bodies such as Sports Coach UK, the Football Association and the Rugby Football Union.

Local authority guidelines for working with children and young people

Local authorities have legal duties underpinned by the Children Act (1989 and 2004) and the Protection of Children Act (1999). To protect yourself when working with children and young people, you must be aware of, and follow, your local authority's guidelines on working with children and young people. Your Local Safeguarding Children Board will provide you with guidelines that are specific to your local area.

Staff behaviour in a relevant context

You should work appropriately with children and young people and not use behaviour that could be misinterpreted by them. If you were to behave in a manner that could be misunderstood or misinterpreted, you could be accused of engaging in behaviour that could constitute abuse. Things that you should never do when working with children and young people include:

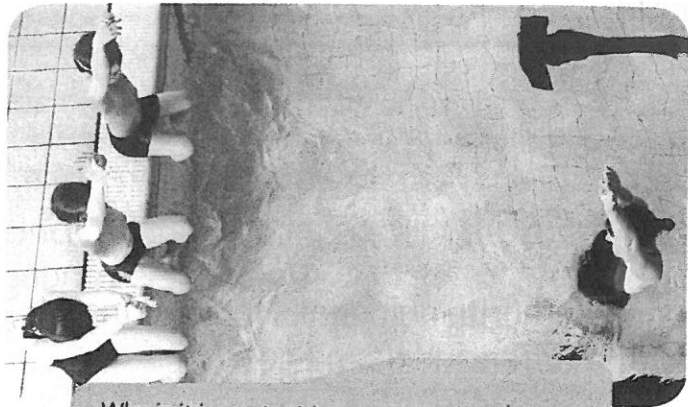
- allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- allow children or young people to use inappropriate language without challenging it
- enter into a adult relationship (physical/sexual) with a person under 18 to whom you are in a position of trust, even if they consent to or suggest the relationship
- allow allegations to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted on.

Police screening of staff

CRB checking is an essential screening process that must be done prior to a member of staff working with children or young people.

Limits and boundaries and why these are important

As a teacher or coach, you should develop relationships with children and young people based



Why is it important to ensure appropriate behaviour and boundaries at all times?

on honesty, trust and respect; both you and the young people must understand the boundaries. Once you have set these boundaries, do what you say you are going to do. This means that there will not be any confusion about the relationship between you and the young person, which will in turn mean that you are less likely to be at risk from allegations.

Understanding neglect and abuse

Child abuse takes many forms, but it can be put into the five main categories of:

- neglect
- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse
- bullying and harassment.
- **Neglect** occurs when adults do not meet the basic physical and/or psychological needs of the child; not meeting these needs could result in impairing the child's health or development. An example of neglect in PE could be the teacher using activities that lead to an unnecessary risk of injury to the child.
- **Physical abuse** occurs when somebody deliberately physically harms a child. An example of physical abuse in PE could be the teacher hitting a child.
- **Sexual abuse** occurs when adults or other children use children to meet their sexual needs. An obvious example of this type of abuse is a teacher having sexual intercourse with a child, but other signs of sexual abuse that could be more difficult to detect could be not following correct guidelines for physical contact with children or taking inappropriate photographs or videos of children.

- **Emotional abuse** is the emotional mistreatment of children that negatively influences their development; and often accompanies neglect, physical abuse or sexual abuse. An example of emotional abuse in PE could be a teacher frightening a child by threatening them; but it could also be at the other end of the spectrum where a teacher does not allow a child to emotionally develop because the teacher is overprotective.
- **Bullying and harassment** – bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour that is usually experienced over a period of time. Harassment is often linked to bullying as this occurs when an individual feels that they have been subjected to unacceptable behaviour. An example of bullying and harassment in PE could be a teacher repeatedly calling a child a name because they are overweight.

Activity: What is abuse?



Imagine that you are working for a national training organisation as part of their child protection training network. You regularly run training events for teachers and sports coaches about child abuse and are in the process of developing some new materials. For your next training event, produce a poster that includes a mind map for each type of abuse. Include as many different examples of each type of abuse as you can think of.

Recognising the signs of neglect and abuse

Recognising the signs of abuse is difficult, even for those who have worked with children for a long time. When children play, they may have accidents that result in cuts and bruises; or they may not be enjoying a game because they are losing which may make them seem uncharacteristically low. There are, however, some signs that you must look out for including: significant changes in the child's behaviour, unexplained bruising, cuts or other marks, deterioration in the child's general wellbeing and comments that cause concern.

Other examples of things that you should report:

- There is a chance that a relationship is developing which could be an abuse of trust.
- You worry that a child or young person is attracted to you or a colleague who is in a position of power or influence over them.

- You have been required to physically restrain a child or young person to prevent them from harming themselves or another person, or from causing significant damage to property.
- A child or young person tells you they are being abused or describes experiences you believe may constitute abuse.

Procedures and policies for expressing concerns about children's welfare

There are set procedures and policies in place for expressing concerns about a child's welfare. These are laid out in the publication 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused – Summary' that is published by the DCSF, so download and save this document. Figure 24.4 gives you an overview of how to deal with concerns about abuse.

Case study: What should you do?



You work at a local leisure centre that offers swimming lessons in the pool for children and young people of different ages. You are one of three swimming teachers working with different groups and the leisure centre manager is the appointed child protection and welfare officer.

Jack is five years old. He has swimming lessons at the local leisure centre during the week and during the holidays. He comes from a very respectable family – his father is a local businessman and his mother is a teacher. With their jobs, Jack's parents are often busy and are in a hurry when they come to collect Jack. Jack is generally a very happy boy – he always joins in with lessons and gets on well with the other children in the group.

Last week, Jack's father came to pick him up from swimming lessons and appeared unusually rushed. Before Jack had finished getting changed, his father put him in the car and drove off at speed. This week, Jack has arrived at the lesson as normal, his father seems much less rushed and Jack is his usual happy self. When Jack comes out to the pool, you notice that he has five straight red marks across the back of his thigh.

1. Is there anything strange about the nature of the marks on Jack's legs?
2. Do you have any reason to be concerned and why?
3. What should you do in this situation?

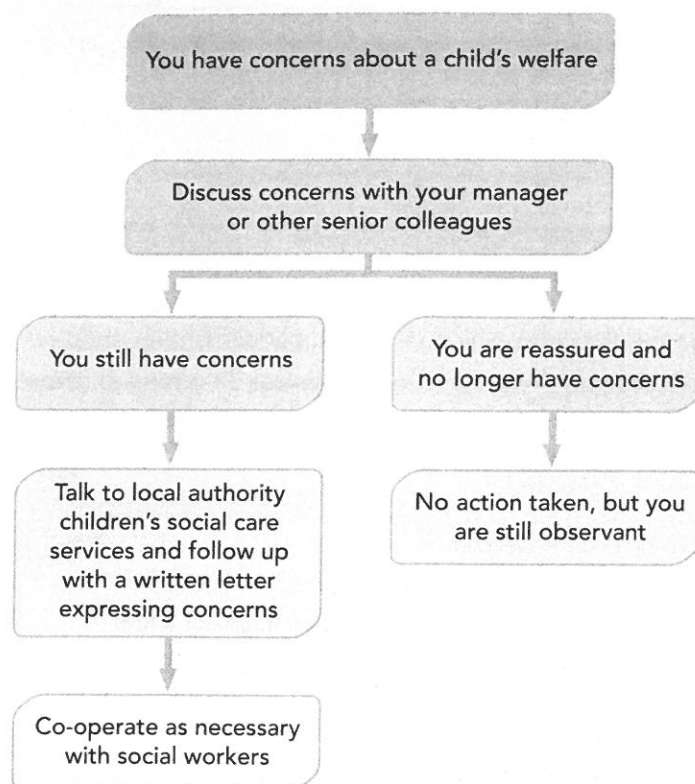


Figure 24.4: How should you deal with any concerns of child abuse?

Roles and responsibilities of those involved in safeguarding children and promoting their welfare, health, safety and security

Everybody who works with a child or young person is responsible for safeguarding them. When working with children you are in a position of trust. This means that you have power and influence over them. You must have transparency in your work and have the highest standards of ethics and behaviour. Some examples include:

- If any of your teaching involves necessary physical contact, you should inform children, young people, parents or carers of this. For example, it may be necessary in gymnastics to support a child for health and safety reasons.
- Make sure that you use age-appropriate language and clarify anything you say.
- Provide all relevant health and safety information.
- Do not leave children or young people unattended.
- Pay attention to any signs of abuse.
- Report concerns that you have to the welfare officer, your manager or child protection officer.
- Maintain confidentiality on a 'need to know' basis.

Remember

If you think that a child or young person is being abused, it is not your responsibility to take control of the situation, nor is it your responsibility to decide whether or not abuse is taking place. It is your responsibility to make sure that the concerns are reported to the appropriate person or organisation.



There are job roles and organisations with specific responsibilities which deal with concerns over child abuse including:

- welfare officer
- child protection officer
- social services
- police.

Take it further

Researching job roles

For each of the job roles above, find out what that job involves and the roles that they have within safeguarding children and young people.



Sources of information and support

There are lots of sources of information and support when working with children or young people. Details of a number of organisations can be found in Table 24.3.

Table 24.3: Sources of information and support when working with children and young people.

Name	Website
Child Protection in Sport Unit	www.nspcc.org.uk
Criminal Records Bureau	www.crb.homeoffice.gov.uk
NSPCC	www.nspcc.org.uk
Sport England	www.sportengland.org
UK Sport	www.ukssport.gov.uk
Youth Sport Trust	www.youthsporttrust.org

Assessment activity 24.4

P7 P8 P9 M3 D2

BTEC

You are working as a welfare officer for your local sports club. You have taken on board some new sports coaches and you are responsible for delivering the information relating to safeguarding the children and young people that they are working with and ensuring their own protection. You have been asked to deliver this information as a presentation to the staff.

1. Describe strategies for supporting the safety of children and young people. **P7**
2. Describe the legislation, policies and procedures that safeguard children and young people. **P8**
3. Explain how these procedures keep children, young people and those working with them safe. **M3**
4. Evaluate these procedures in terms of how they keep everyone concerned safe. **D2**
5. Describe strategies to ensure your own protection when working with children and young people. **P9**

Grading tips

- To attain **P7** describe a range of strategies, for example, empowering children and young people.
- To attain **P8** select a range of relevant legislation (for example, the Children Act), procedures and policies (for example, CRB checks) that are used to safeguard children and young people and describe the parts that are relevant to a learning environment.
- To attain **M3**, for the procedures that you selected, explain (for example, by providing examples) how they keep children, young people and those working with them, safe.
- To attain **D2**, for the procedures that you selected, evaluate their effectiveness by looking at strengths or areas for improvement within the procedures.
- To attain **P9** describe a range of strategies that are used to ensure your own protection (for example, using appropriate behaviour).

PLTS

When you are researching, compiling and making your presentation you can demonstrate your **self-manager**, **independent enquirer** and **creative thinker** skills.



Functional skills

When you are accessing and assessing safeguarding policies for your presentation you can demonstrate your **ICT** and **English** skills.

