

CPSU Framework of National Standards for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport UK



Type of intervention



Book/Guide

Target group/s, level/s of prevention and sub-group/s:

Situations
/ Places

Sport and Leisure | Male & Female | Book/Guide | English

Target population

The Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) framework of National Standards for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport aims to increase the capacity of sport to protect children and young people involved in all levels and types of sport from all forms of abuse including child sexual abuse. The framework provides a benchmark for sports organisations to work towards and applies (with some variations) to local, regional and national clubs in England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland. It is implemented through each sport's National Governing Body (NGB) and County Sports Partnerships in England (CSPs) with support from the CPSU.

Delivery organisation (e.g. LFF UK, Prison Service of England and Wales)

The CPSU; a partnership between the NSPCC, Sport England, Sport Northern Ireland and Sport Wales. In Scotland there is a similar partnership between the NSPCC, Children 1st and sportscotland.

Mode and context of delivery

Working with sports organisations across the UK, the CPSU established a framework of standards for safeguarding and protecting children in sport, based on good practice, legislation and research evidence. The standards draw on what is known about situational prevention. The standards are designed to be implemented by each Sport's National Governing Body (NGB) and by County Sports Partnerships (CSPs). In England, Sport England (which has overall responsibility for sports and for distributing government funding) mandated the standards framework and made

progress to achieving and maintaining the standards, a condition of funding for sports. Organisations are assessed by the CPSU to determine whether they are achieving the standards and subsequently a process of self-assessment and peer review follows to determine the effectiveness of the safeguards, the extent to which they are being embedded throughout the sport and whether progress is maintained.

Support in implementing this framework of good practice is provided to sports organisations by the CPSU in a variety of ways, including one-to-one consultancy, learning sets, educational programmes and resources, information products, videos and website (www.cpsu.org.uk).

Level/Nature of staff expertise required (e.g. professional background)

The CPSU employs professionally qualified staff (e.g. those with backgrounds in social work, health, education and probation) with expertise and experience of child protection work and an understanding of the sports sector.

NGBs and CSPs employ development officers with specific responsibility for child protection. They usually have a sports development background or, increasingly, have a social work or police background) and undertake specific training to equip them to carry out their child protection role. The CPSU has designed a training programme and resource called 'Time to Listen' for this purpose.

At a local club level a designated person is identified to lead on child protection. This volunteer role is usually taken by someone with relevant experience. The designated person undertakes specific 'Time to Listen' training for club welfare officers to prepare them for this role. A face to face training course *Safeguarding and protecting children* for coaches and others is delivered by SportscoachUK.

Intensity/extent of engagement with target group(s)

The Standards framework in England consists of 10 standards (see below for details). The assessment of whether NGBs and CSPs meet these standards is carried out by the CPSU reviewing a portfolio of evidence in three stages: bronze, silver and gold. The length of time it takes NGBs to achieve and evidence all 10 of the standards varies but it usually takes several years, during which time information, support, consultancy, training and learning sets are provided according to need by the CPSU.

Once the standards have been achieved a process of continual improvement known as the 'Framework for maintaining and embedding safeguarding for children in and through sport' is introduced (see below for details). An annual meeting is held with the CPSU to review progress.

In Wales, while the principles are the same, the framework is smaller and assessment is at three levels and this is through a portfolio combined with a meeting with a panel from Sport Wales and the CPSU.

In NI there is an annual assessment process by the CPSU.

Description of intervention

As stated above, a framework of standards to prevent abuse has been introduced in each part of the UK. In the detailed description below we focus on the framework in England. There are strong common elements across the UK and some variations.

The Framework of Standards for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport (2005) was developed through a partnership between sports and the CPSU, with input from expert academics, following incidents of sexual abuse of young athletes by high profile sports coaches. The aim of the standards framework is:

- to create a safe sporting environment for children and young people
- to provide a benchmark to assist those involved in sport to make informed decisions
- to promote good practice and challenge practices that are harmful to children

There are ten standards which are relevant to all sports at all levels taking place in an organised setting. For each standard, information is provided on the rationale for the standard; the criteria to be met; essential inclusion and suggested way of evidencing the standards, which cover the following areas:

- policy
- procedures and systems
- prevention
- codes of practice and behaviour
- equity
- communication
- education and training
- access to advice and support
- implementation and maintaining
- influencing (CSPs only)

Sport England requires each sport's National Governing Body to make progress to achieving the standards as a condition of funding. The standards have been subdivided into 3 levels to assist NGBs to progressively achieve them over time. They are required to submit evidence in the form of a portfolio to an independent panel managed by the CPSU and when assessed as meeting the standards are awarded a bronze, silver or gold award in recognition. The standards are now a requirement for Olympic and Paralympic sports which receive funding from UK Sport.

A Framework for maintaining and embedding safeguarding for children in and through sport (2011) has been developed. This aims to ensure sports maintain the standards and get closer embedding prevention measures at the grass roots levels of the sport. The process for assessing this framework is as follows:

- Self-assessment using a Self-Assessment Tool (SAT)
- Assessing implementation and impact at local level through deep dive peer review
- Development of safeguarding implementation plan and external signoff of plan

Extensive support is provided to sports organisations by the CPSU to enable them to achieve and maintain the standards. This includes a website www.thecpsu.org.uk with briefings, information, resources, research, videos, exemplars, training materials, guidance, toolkits and checklists. Access to professional advice, training and consultancy is available. Learning sets are organised for sports organisations.

Evaluation

A progress report called 'Safeguarding in Sport Children's Initiative' (NSPCC 2013) summarises changes that have been achieved in sport following the introduction of the standards. Downloadable from www.thecpsu.org.uk

Professor Celia Brackenridge, Brunel University is currently undertaking research into the effectiveness of international standards to prevent abuse in sport. She and colleagues have written extensively about child protection in sport. See Brunel University website (<http://www.brunel.ac.uk/>).

References

A framework for safeguarding and protecting children in and through sport in Wales. (NSPCC 2013.) www.thecpsu.org.uk

Club Framework for safeguarding standards in sport (NI). NSPCC. Jan. 2010). www.thecpsu.org.uk

Standards for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport. (NSPCC January 2005). www.thecpsu.org.uk

The experiences of children participating in organised sport in the UK. NSPCC 2011. www.thecpsu.org.uk

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For general information and resources see website www.thecpsu.org.uk