

Appendix 2 : Sample child safeguarding policy and implementation guide for MAs

Policy statement

Our association is committed to providing football in a fun, safe and respectful environment for all children. We recognise children's right to be free from all forms of abuse and acknowledge our duty of care to safeguard them.

Purpose of the policy

This policy provides a framework to ensure that children are safeguarded in the delivery of our sport. It will be accompanied by codes of conduct, guidelines and procedures to support implementation. It applies to all those under 18, without discrimination of any kind. We acknowledge that some children can be particularly vulnerable to abuse (e.g. disabled children, or those on elite pathways), and we accept the responsibility to promote their inclusion, safety and well-being across our game.

Scope of the policy

This policy applies to the following people (this is not an exhaustive list) : coaches / instructors; medical staff; managers; administrators and coordinators; volunteers; parents / guardians; peer / youth mentors; implementing partners; consultants / contractors / subcontractors.

It covers the following definitions :

Child : a person under the age of 18 years.

Child abuse : an act or omission that harms a child. Abuse towards a child can be carried out by an adult or by another child. It can be physical, emotional, sexual or by neglect. Abuse can take place in person or online.

Safeguarding : the action taken to ensure that *all* children are safe from harm when involved in football. It means proactively doing everything possible to minimise risk and prevent abuse of children.

Child protection : refers to the action taken in response to a *specific* concern for a child or children who may be suffering or are at risk of suffering harm or abuse. It is an essential part of safeguarding and requires referral to specialised child protection services, law- enforcement agencies and expert local organisations who are trained to advice on and manage cases, if concerns arise.

As part of our policy we will :

- Appoint a safeguarding officer.
- Set up an internal steering group to guide our work and / or an external expert advisory group.
- Map out, identify and establish partnerships with local child protection authorities / agencies and civil society organisations with expertise in this area that can provide help and advice.
- Ensure appropriate and immediate action is taken to address allegations of abuse through referral of concerns to the relevant statutory authorities.¹¹
- Develop an implementation / action plan to promote and install safeguarding measures across the MA.
- Prevent the employment / deployment of unsuitable individuals (staff and volunteers) in football through safe recruitment and screening procedures.
- Ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding in football and provide all staff and volunteers with appropriate training when joining the organisation, as well as provide further training and updates on a regular basis (at least annually).
- Require all members of staff and volunteers to sign and comply with the code of conduct.

¹¹ In some contexts, the relevant statutory authorities may not exist, so it is important to map out and build partnerships with expert local organisations / NGOs who are trained and competent in this area.

- Manage concerns of poor practice and breaches of the code of conduct through the relevant competent body of the MA.
- Ensure children are informed of their rights and understand where to go if they have concerns or need help.
- Ensure investigatory, disciplinary and appeals processes are in place to appropriately manage allegations, reports and cases where staff or volunteers have been found to have breached this policy and the code of conduct. Case management and support for victims of abuse (or alleged victims), and those accused, will be undertaken by the relevant authorities. Any internal MA investigation will be put on hold until statutory investigations are complete, so that internal processes do not compromise statutory or criminal investigations.
- Ensure that confidential and accurate records of concerns, allegations, and reports and submitted evidence provided are maintained and securely stored.
- Ensure that we continually evaluate how children are involved in football in our country and review our safeguarding practices on a regular basis, at least annually, to ensure that we learn and improve safeguarding, in keeping with evolving best practices and national legislation. Furthermore, we will proactively consult with children with the guidance of local agencies and partners.

This policy, and its accompanying code of conduct, procedures and guidelines, will be widely promoted and made available on the [insert name of member association] website. Failure by staff and volunteers to comply with this policy will be investigated and may result in dismissal. The implementation / action plan below will be used to help us with the planning and prioritising of our work.

Lead officer : the safeguarding officer of [insert name of member association] is _____.
Contact : tel. : _____ email : _____

Monitoring :

This policy will be reviewed annually together with expert local organisations / NGOs, or more urgently in the following circumstances :

- changes in national legislation, policies and services related to children's rights, child protection and safeguarding;
- as a result of any other significant change, or event or specific case arising.

Approved by :

Executive committee or council

(Last reviewed on xxxx 2019)

Suggested MA implementation / action plan for safeguarding

(adapt as necessary to your context or stage of safeguarding)

Action	Priority level (1-5) with 1 being highest priority	Person / group responsible	Resources required	Comments & notes	Target completion date	Completed Yes / no / in progress
MA safeguarding assessment						
Safeguarding workshop held with key stakeholders, staff and volunteers						
Policy adopted by executive committee or council						
Safeguarding officer appointed						
Advisory group / steering group established						
Safe recruitment guidelines developed and adopted						
Procedures and guidelines in place to minimise risks to children – risk assessment tool adopted						
Process for responding to concerns agreed within the MA and with local partners, which is clearly understood and						

communicated to all staff and volunteers						
<p>Communication, training and education plan to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -widely promote the agreed reporting lines -train all staff and volunteers on safeguarding -promote the MA's policy and code of conduct 						
Monitoring and evaluation plan in place						