

Events held in public parks and spaces: *Additional safeguarding considerations*

Introduction

This briefing is for anyone responsible for planning and running sports events for children on public spaces, e.g. on fields, parks or other areas that are open to the general public. It provides essential guidance for event organisers on how to address the particular challenges presented by these more open sites.

The guidance complements and builds on established event safeguarding/welfare planning and good practice (further detailed safe event guidance can be found at: www.thecpsu.org.uk) - which must include procedures for reporting safeguarding concerns, accident and incident reporting, participant registration and appropriate first aid provision.

Where relevant the factors listed below should be incorporated into the event planning process. The guidance reflects the different actions required for example at an event held on a bounded suburban playing field from one taking place on open or rural parkland.

Safeguarding arrangements need to take into account the needs of any child or young person attending the event in any role, including members of the public.

Considerations fall into the following broad areas, their relevance being determined by the venue, the planned activity, the range of participants, and so on:

Supervision Event Management processes

Pre Event

The pre-event site visit (part of the site/facility risk assessment) should include:

- identification of all entrances and exits to the event area – and the security of any boundary fences, hedges or walls
- noting any specific potential risk features (e.g. lakes, rivers, buildings, equipment and so)
- specific points where the public may come into contact with athletes (e.g. toilets, cafes, shops and so on)
- checking that the facilities and activities are accessible for disabled children and adults
- establish if other activities will be held on the site at the same time

**In light of the risk assessment plan for:
Staffing**

- adequate staffing of all entrances, exits, toilets and other identified points
- event staff patrolling the site perimeter
- event staff, volunteers and participants wearing identifiable clothing (e.g. high-visibility vests or coloured tee shirts for staff)

Security and signage

- cordoning off activity areas for event staff, participants and approved others only, and provide accreditation for event staff, volunteers and participants
- signage (appropriate for young people) to help them find their way around the site/s
- depending on the size and complexity of the site provide maps/plans for staff, volunteers, participants and parents
- establish and sign post to an information/lost children point and establish a procedure to respond to lost/found children who have become separated from their parents/carers (typically non-participants)

Handover arrangements

- a clear venue and system for the handover of children to parents at end of event (do not allow young people to just disappear unaccounted for); stipulate that children leave as they arrive in school/club groups unless it is pre-agreed with parents/guardians that older participants will travel home independently
- arrangements so event staff stay until the last young person is safely accounted for and that suitable arrangements are made for any participants whose parents/guardians fail to collect them

Weather contingencies

- weather contingencies being in place
- the distance to adequate cover e.g. in the event of a storm
- places where can children shelter/rest when eating etc.

Other on-site activities

- any other activities taking place on the site e.g. other groups or events on the day
- informing group leaders or team managers that young people may wish to use static facilities (eg bouncy castles or playgrounds) in down times
- ensuring that clarifying group leaders or team managers understand that such facilities are not part of the event and participants use at own risk

Pre event Information to parents/carers

- Ensure that parents and team managers are aware of when the duty of care is transferred from and back to the parent (is this at event site or at school/club departure points, and at what times)
- Emphasise the importance of parents complying with these arrangements – particularly at the end of the event where it is vital that a formal handover takes place to avoid confusion or fears that children are simply missing
- If there are no catering facilities inform parents that food and drink will be required.
- If there are catering facilities it may be helpful to let parents/carers know what is available and the cost.
- In the pre- event information to parents/carers in addition to the normal registration forms:
- Inform parents that the event is in a public park/place, and that:
 - Members of the public who are not part of the event may be taking photographs
 - Toilets/cafes and other facilities will be being used by people who are not part of the event.
 - They should advise their children not speak to strangers and to stay with their group.

Supervision of the young people

- In addition to usual ratios for adults to young people ensure extra adult supervision as required by the nature of the site/facility
- Plan and use suitable group control measures (e.g. buddy systems, large groups split in small groups each with named leaders),
- Ensure both the young people and the adults managing them wear recognisable/identifiable clothing
- Ensure the young people receive a pre event briefing on what to do if separated from group and that all relevant adults are aware of the procedure (establish key muster point/s) for responding
- Ensure head counts are undertaken by leaders particularly at arrival/departure points, and when separating and reforming groups
- Promote an event missing young person procedure
- Ensure young people are aware of arrangements for toilet use by young people when public will also be using them.
- If members of the public will be using toilets, cafes and other facilities- make sure that there is an event presence at these points:
 - To monitor and ensure that contact between young people and members of the public is appropriate
 - Motivate and encourage young people to return to their groups in a timely manner
 - To help young people if they are lost etc.
 - Ensure all teams/participants are registered and that they are signed in and out of the activity.

Event Management

- Inform local police that the event is taking place.
- Check local bye-laws, for example in relation to dogs being allowed off leads and also public alcohol consumption.
- Contact the local council/provider to find out numbers for dog wardens especially what to do for out of hours, if for example there is a dog causing a nuisance on the site.
- Ensure areas are clear of debris and litter especially dog faeces which can cause illness.

- Establish If other activities are planned for the site and risk assess implications
- Put signage up to advise that in a public place photographs may be taken as part of event media or by members of the public
- Ensure that the facilities and the activities remain accessible for people with disabilities.
- Check that you have mobile phone coverage at all parts of the venue.
- Provide First Aid
- Provide water for participants

Briefings for staff and volunteers should cover:

- Potential dangers of infection from animal faeces (EColi) and preventative measures
- Supervision on pavements, roads and especially crossing of any fast roads is pre-planned. It is recommended to cross in lines parallel to road, with an adult at each end; and with large groups split into smaller waves
- Potential hazards associated with the site
- Responding to suspicious behaviour by members of the public
- codes of conduct for events should enforce that those taking part should not consume alcohol or smoke, even though members of the public may smoke or consume alcohol
- Lost/missing young person or separated parents/carers procedure
- Comfort break arrangements

Briefings for children and young people should cover:

- What to do if they get lost or separated from their group
- Their timetable for the day
- Where key facilities are on-site
- Potential hazards associated with the site – including areas they are prohibited from going
- Group discussion and agreement on standards of behaviour expected when representing their sport, club, school or region, and potential consequences of breaches
- What to do if they are concerned about someone's behaviour towards them or another child
- Arrangements for refreshments and comfort breaks
- Departure arrangements, muster and pick up points
- Reminding young people to take extra care of personal belongings, particularly any valuables such as mobile phones.

Post Event Management

- Review all safeguarding concerns/cases arising at the event
- Evaluate and recommend any future changes.
- Check social media sites as far as possible to ensure photographs etc. are appropriate.

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	Yes/No	Comments/Action required	Responsible person
1. Site visit undertaken			
2. Specific risk features identified			
3. Mobile phone reception across whole site			
4. Other events taking place on site			
5. Entrances/boundary staffing requirements			
6. Public access to facilities (e.g. toilets, café, changing area etc)			
7. Accessibility for disabled participants			
8. Site signage requirements			
9. Site maps developed and distributed			
10. Weather/cover contingencies			
11. Duty of care handover arrangements agreed and communicated			
12. Supervision arrangements for young people agreed			
13. Lost/found children arrangements clarified			