

# Best practice guide

Developing safeguarding  
in sport policy, guidance  
and procedure

British  
Gymnastics



LIME CULTURE

FARRER & Co

# Acknowledgements

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## Background

In 1995, a pivotal legal case in the UK sparked widespread concern about the safety of children in sports, prompting calls for increased protection for children who participated in sport. Over the following six years, significant developments shaped the landscape of safeguarding in sports. The establishment of the NSPCC's Child Protection in Sport Unit marked a crucial step, providing education and support to National Governing Bodies in addressing abuse. Subsequent milestones included the introduction of Lead Child Protection Officers and standards for safeguarding children in sports, laying the foundation for proactive prevention efforts.

These achievements helped pave the way for the term 'safeguarding in sport' to be established, encouraging sports to think more proactively to prevent abuse from occurring to children, rather than just responding when it did. Furthermore, the introduction of safeguarding adults is redefining the safer sport landscape to ensure adults who participate in sport are also protected from harm and abuse.

Whilst the move away from protection and towards safeguarding was a positive cultural shift in the sporting world, it has also meant that gradually the definition of safeguarding in the context of sport has expanded to include creating a safer environment for all participants in sport. While these additions are often well-intentioned, they have resulted in a complex and convoluted web of safeguarding in sport policies, procedures, and guidance documents. As a consequence, what was once a clear and straightforward approach for safeguarding in sport has become muddled and confusing. This intertwining of safeguarding in sport policies, guidance and procedures has left end-users, including coaches, officials, and even athletes themselves, grappling with an array of overlapping guidelines and protocols that are not clearly defined or easy to navigate. The result is a situation where the very documents designed to protect and ensure the well-being of individuals within the sporting community may have become, paradoxically, barriers to effective safeguarding practices.

## Purpose of this document

This document serves as an essential guide, focusing on clarifying the roles and differences between safeguarding in sport policies, guidance, and procedures. Through clear delineation, it aims to provide sporting organisations including National Governing Bodies, Sports Partnerships, Clubs and other sporting organisations with a clear understanding of the purpose and function

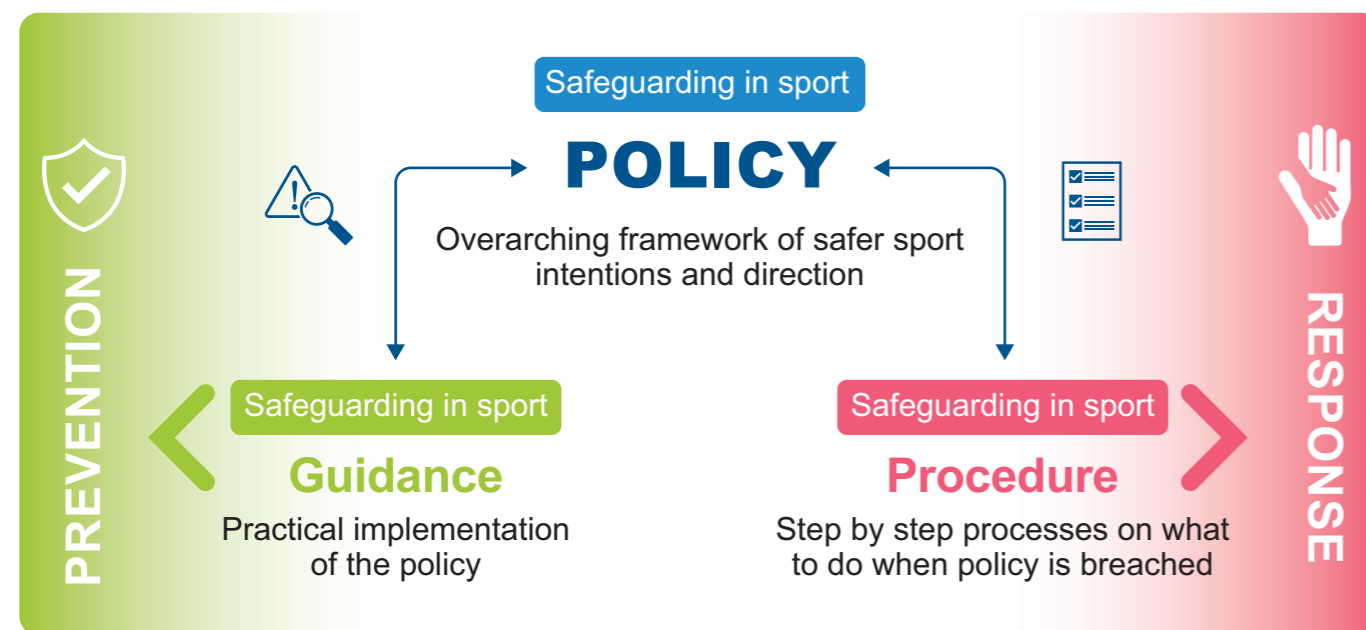
of each document and how they contribute to the overarching goal of safeguarding in sport. By providing clarity on the distinct features of each document, this guide aims to empower those tasked with creating and implementing effective safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures within the sports sector.



# Differentiating between safer sport policy, guidance and procedures

Although each document has a unique purpose, it is critical to recognise that each is interconnected and that only together do they create the pathway for safeguarding in sport. The diagram below outlines how policy, guidance and procedures are connected

and how together they create a strong governance approach to safeguarding in sport. Furthermore, the diagram outlines how the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures are underpinned by eight developmental principles:



## Development principles

Eight principles that underpin how to develop safer sport policy, guidance, and procedures



## Safeguarding in sport policy

At its core, the policy serves as the overarching document of intentions and direction, with its primary purpose to outline the sporting organisations intention to keep everyone (including athletes, coaches, officials, spectators at events, volunteers, and staff) safe in sport, whilst acknowledging that children and some adults must be considered under additional legislation specific to their home Country. The policy should set out the sporting organisations commitments and responsibilities for keeping everyone safe in sport. For example, the policy could include the sporting organisations:

- Commitments to keeping everyone safe in sport.
- Safeguarding in sport responsibilities.
- Whistleblowing commitment statements.
- Codes of Conduct.

## Safeguarding in sport guidance

The safeguarding in sport guidance should support and provide resources, templates, practical advice and direction to enable participants to implement the safeguarding policy. In essence, guidance acts as a roadmap for turning the safeguarding in sport policy into practice. For example, the safeguarding in sport guidance could include practical guidance on:

- How to undertake risk assessments.
- Embedding safer recruitment advice.
- The type and required safeguarding in sport training for each stakeholder.
- How to use social media safely.
- How to ensure safe overnight stays and competitions.
- How to develop risk registers and risk management plans.
- And much more!

## Safeguarding in sport procedures

Procedures are detailed instructions that support the overarching safeguarding policy and come into play when the policy has been breached. Procedures explain how an organisation will respond when an incident occurs, for example where:

- there are concerns about a child or adult's safety or wellbeing.
- concerns or allegations are made about a member of staff or coach.

Procedures lay out a step-by-step process about how to respond when incidents occur and provide clarity on what actions to take, who should be involved, and the timeline for resolution. It is vital that good governance, good management and robust processes support the procedures that are in place.

## Development principles

The development of safeguarding in sport policy, guidance, and procedures is a task that should be undertaken by each sporting organisation individually. A one-size-fits-all template cannot be universally applied to different sporting organisations as these documents must be crafted uniquely to align with the specific context, culture, and nuances of each sport. Achieving this requires a tailored approach to ensure the policy, guidance and procedure have the highest chance of success in creating a safer environment that prevents and responds to safety and wellbeing concerns in sport.

As such, eight development principles have been created to help sporting organisations develop and implement their safer sport policy, guidance and procedures.





## The eight development principles

These eight principles have been curated through extensive research, safeguarding in sport reviews, and insightful interviews and focus groups involving a wide range of key stakeholders from the world of safeguarding and sport.

These principles serve as the foundational framework essential for the development of safeguarding in sport policy, guidance, and procedures. These principles collectively create a holistic approach to ensuring the effectiveness of each document in promoting safeguarding in sport. It is important to recognise that these eight principles are interconnected, underscoring the importance of incorporating all of them during the development of safer sport policies, guidance, and procedures.

The following section provides a detailed guide about each of the eight principles, explaining what the principle is, why the principle is essential and provides practical guidance about how to embed this principle throughout the development of safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures.

It is important to note that the principles are not mutually exclusive; instead, they interconnect and overlap, forming a holistic approach to the creation of safeguarding in sport policy, guidance, and procedures. As such, while each principle has a unique significance and importance in the development of safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures, some of the activities in achieving these principles will look very similar.

Finally developing policy, guidance, and procedure in this way will take time and effort. As each sporting organisation differs in size and complexity, it is essential that sporting organisations are proportionate in their approach to using the development principles when developing their safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures and plan the time and resource accordingly. This will result in documents that set the intentions, expectations and processes for a safer sport environment.

### The eight principles are:

- 1 Collectively owned
- 2 Values driven
- 3 Person-centred
- 4 Evidence-based and risk informed
- 5 Co-produced
- 6 Accessible and clear
- 7 Implementation focused
- 8 Continuously improved



# Collectively owned

## What is the principle?

Collectively owned is the active and committed involvement of key stakeholders from all levels of the sporting organisation, including those at the highest levels of the sporting organisation in the process of developing their safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures. These stakeholders typically include executives such as the CEO, board members, and senior management such as Directors of Performance, Participation, Learning, Communication, People and Culture as well as those who are more operational including front line staff and volunteers, athletes, supporters at events, parents and officials. It emphasises that creating comprehensive and effective safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures requires a united commitment and active engagement from everyone connected to the organisation, irrespective of their role or position.

## Why is this principle important?

This principle is the foundation of a culture of safeguarding in sport. It acknowledges that safeguarding in sport is not the responsibility of a single person or department, but a collective duty shared by all members of the sports community. When individuals from the top leadership to the most enthusiastic athletes are invested in safeguarding in sport, a powerful culture of vigilance, respect, and accountability is fostered.

Collective ownership ensures that safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures are adopted across the sporting community, creating a true culture of a zero-tolerance approach to abuse and harm in sport. Moreover, it creates a sense of unity, fostering trust, and strengthening the commitment of everyone involved.

## Examples of how to implement this principle:

- 1. Championing the initiative:** The Board and CEO publicly champion the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures development process, emphasising its importance and priority within the sporting organisation. They communicate their commitment through official statements, organisational newsletters, and public appearances to create awareness and build trust among stakeholders.
- 2. Appointing a dedicated working group:** The Board and CEO appoint a dedicated working group or committee with a clear mandate for developing the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance, and procedures. This working group could comprise of experts from relevant fields, representatives from different levels of the organisation, and individuals with expertise in safeguarding (prevention and response), policy, communication, elite sport and community sport.
- 3. Athlete engagement:** Involve athletes and supporters at events in safeguarding discussions, emphasising their role in upholding a safe and respectful sports environment.
- 4. Recognition:** Acknowledge and appreciate the contributions of stakeholders at all levels in shaping the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures development, fostering a sense of shared ownership.

### British Gymnastics

The CEO and senior leaders of British Gymnastics actively supported and contributed to developing their safeguarding policy by dedicating resources and participating in focus groups and consultations. This effort included input from various parts of the organisation, including the governance team and the safeguarding and welfare teams. To highlight the policy's importance, the senior leadership team provided a statement and their signatures on the policy document.

Additionally, gymnasts, coaches, welfare officers, and a range of external stakeholders were consulted and contributed to the policy's content. Their involvement is recognised and acknowledged within the policy, ensuring it reflects the needs and concerns of the gymnastic community.

# Values driven

## What is the principle?

Safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures are developed to mirror and uphold the core beliefs, ethical standards, and objectives that define the very purpose of the sporting organisation. This principle ensures that the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures development and implementation are guided by the organisation's fundamental principles, prioritising the safety and well-being of all participants.

## Why is this principle important?

This principle is fundamental because it ensures that the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures are not isolated documents, but rather an inherent and intrinsic component of the sporting organisation's identity. By aligning safeguarding in sport with the organisations mission and values, the sporting organisation conveys a resolute commitment to safeguarding all participants. This integration engenders trust and confidence amongst stakeholders, fostering a culture of care and respect that will filter through all aspects of sport's activities. Furthermore, when the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures are deeply rooted in the sporting organisation's mission and values, they go beyond being a mere set of rules and transform into a guiding compass. They become a moral and ethical imperative that endure beyond short-term changes, fostering continuity in prioritising the well-being of athletes and reinforcing the organisation's commitment to creating a safer sports environment.



## Examples of how to implement this principle:

- 1. Reflective evaluation:** Assessing the sporting organisation's mission statement and core values to identify how they align to safeguarding in sport, respect, and inclusivity. If there is no alignment, sporting organisations may wish to review their organisational mission.
- 2. Conscious alignment with mission statement and values:** Ensuring that safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures are directly aligned with the sporting organisation's mission and values. For instance, if the organisation champions integrity and fair play, ensure that the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures addresses safer sport in this manner.
- 3. Consistent messaging:** Maintaining consistent language and tone throughout the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures, ensuring alignment with the sporting organisation's overall communication style. This consistency will reinforce the inextricable link between safeguarding in sport and the organisation's identity.
- 4. Periodic review and adaptation:** Regularly reviewing the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures alongside the organisation's mission and values. Updating the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures to maintain equivalence and relevance as the organisation evolves.

### British Triathlon

British Triathlon clearly state that the safety and welfare of their participants are central to their values. Their identified values include **be people centred; be ambitious; be inclusive and do what's right**.

**Be people centred and be inclusive** is reflected in the statement of intent: *'Everyone who participates in swim, bike, run is entitled to participate in an enjoyable and safe environment'*. This intention is well communicated to the triathlon community and echoed in their mission 'Great experiences through swim, bike, run'. This is not merely a statement, but a principle that is lived and experienced at all levels of the sport.

**Do what's right** is demonstrated by the ownership of responsibility to ensure the sport is safe, making it clear that everyone involved plays a part in creating a safer environment for participation.

These values are reflected in the **code of ethics** and forms the basis of the **codes of practices** for coaches and officials, reinforcing a values-based approach to standards of behaviour, conduct and safeguarding.



# Person centred

## What is the principle?

Individuals (children and adults) are placed at the heart of the development and implementation of safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures. The safety, well-being, and dignity of each participant involved in sports activities, whether child or adult across all aspects of the sport including athletes, coaches, officials, support staff and spectators at events are prioritised. This principle recognises the unique needs and experiences of individuals and aims to create a safe and supportive environment that empowers and protects them.

## Why is this principle important?

This principle acknowledges that every person involved in sport is unique, with distinct vulnerabilities, rights, and aspirations. By adopting a person-centred approach, the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance, and procedures move beyond a one-size-fits-all mentality and take into account the diverse backgrounds, abilities, and circumstances of individuals. This inclusivity promotes trust and open communication, making it more likely for individuals to come forward to report concerns, seek support, and actively participate in creating a safer sports culture.

A person-centred approach also fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility among stakeholders, as they feel valued and respected within the sports community. When participants feel seen and heard, they are more likely to actively engage in safeguarding in sport initiatives and contribute to the overall success of the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance, and procedures.



## Examples of how to implement this principle:

- 1. Engage individuals with lived experiences:** Inviting individuals who have experienced safeguarding concerns in sport to share their perspectives and influence the development of safeguarding in sport.
- 2. Form advisory groups:** Establishing an advisory group or committee that includes individuals with lived experiences and sector expertise. This group can provide ongoing guidance throughout the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures development process.
- 3. Collaborate with support organisations:** Partnering with organisations that specialise in addressing specific issues, such as abuse prevention or mental health support. These organisations can offer insights and resources to inform the safeguarding in sport policies, guidance, and procedure.
- 4. Interviews and focus groups:** Conducting interviews and focus groups with individuals who have relevant experience to gather firsthand insights and stories that can shape the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures provisions.
- 5. Regular consultations:** Maintaining open channels of communication with individuals and organisations with lived experiences and expertise, seeking their feedback and suggestions as the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures evolves.
- 6. Acknowledgment and recognition:** Giving credit and recognition to individuals and organisations that contribute to the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures development, fostering a sense of shared ownership.

### Yorkshire Cricket

Yorkshire Cricket launched a 'listening to children strategy' and established the Pathway Player Committee (the PPC), consisting of 12 representatives aged 8 to 18 who were selected through a fair recruitment process.

Yorkshire Cricket consults the PPC on key policies and guidance to ensure they are using the right terminology that contributes to **child-friendly anti-bullying guidance** to ensure all children on the Pathway understand the commitment to eradicate bullying. They are currently developing child-led training packages for coaches and parents to share ideas on anti-bullying.

The PPC and player advisory groups have been invaluable assets for both the **Safeguarding and Talent Pathway**. However, their contributions have extended beyond these areas. The players have collaborated with **Marketing, Commercial, Operations** and the **Health & Safety** departments to ensure that children can influence decisions being made across the organisation.



# Evidence-based and risk informed

## What is the principle?

Developing safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures should be based on current research relating to safeguarding risks in sport as well as current local and national safeguarding risks. The development of the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures should be determined by data-driven insights on safeguarding risks, research, and informed assessments of potential dangers and vulnerabilities within the particular sports environment in a proportionate manner.

## Why is this principle important?

This principle fosters a proactive and systematic approach to addressing safeguarding in sport. By relying on evidence and data insights on risks in sport, the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance, and procedures can encompass all aspects of safeguarding in sport using a risk-based approach. Evidence-based safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures enable sports organisations to identify and address prevalent issues, making the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance, and procedures more efficient and impactful. Moreover, a risk-informed approach anticipates and prepares for potential challenges, minimising the likelihood of safeguarding in sport incidents and enhancing the overall protection of all participants.



## Examples of how to implement this principle:

- 1. Research and data collection:** Reviewing and conducting research and data collection on risk-related matters specific to the sport. This includes analysing past incidents, and available research on best practices for safeguarding in sport in a proportionate manner.
- 2. Risk assessment:** Undertaking a risk assessment for safeguarding in sport, including both the sports activities and its participants (children, adults, members, staff, athletes, coaches, officials etc.).
- 3. Engaging experts:** Consulting with internal and external experts in safeguarding in sport, child and adult protection and safeguarding, mental health, and risk management to gain valuable insights and expertise in shaping the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures.
- 4. Regular review:** Continuously reviewing and updating the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance, and procedures in light of emerging evidence, changing trends, and feedback from stakeholders. Regular assessments will ensure that the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance, and procedures remain relevant and effective over time.

## Table Tennis England

Table Tennis England recently relaunched their safeguarding policy and procedures under the **SafeTT** initiative.

The safeguarding team carefully reviewed and considered feedback from club welfare officers to ensure the safeguarding policy includes only essential information on how to manage a concern. In response to feedback, they removed the extensive list of child protection and adult safeguarding legislation from the front of the policy, recognising that while the Dedicated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) need to be familiar with the legislation, the club welfare officers and clubs do not.

# Co-produced

## What is the principle?

Co-production and co-design of the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures is the active involvement of and collaboration with all relevant stakeholders in the development process. It recognises that the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures' effectiveness relies on the collective input, expertise, and perspectives of those directly affected by it, including athletes, coaches, officials, parents, and other members of the sports community. This principle places value on creating safeguarding in sport policy, guidance, and procedures that are co-owned by all stakeholders, ensuring their needs, concerns, and ideas are integrated into the final development.

## Why is this principle important?

This principle is essential because it empowers the sports community and fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility towards safeguarding in sport. Involving all stakeholders throughout the development of the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures enhances their relevance and effectiveness. When individuals see their voices being heard and their experiences valued, they become more invested in implementing and adhering to the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance, and procedures. Additionally, when stakeholders actively participate in shaping the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance, and procedures, they are more likely to view them as a collective effort rather than an imposition, resulting in a higher likelihood of compliance and cooperation. Furthermore, this collaborative approach builds trust, transparency, and accountability within the sports organisation, leading to a stronger and more united commitment to creating a safe sports environment and culture.



## Examples of how to implement this principle:

- 1. Engage the task force:** Creating a task force comprising of representatives from a range of stakeholder groups as this will help to build trust and provide scrutiny.
- 2. Develop a plan:** Enabling the task force to develop a comprehensive plan of how and when they will engage differing groups of stakeholders, including how they will ascertain their feedback to ensure effective co-production and co-design.
- 3. Open consultations:** Holding open consultations, focus groups, surveys, and meetings to gather feedback and insights from stakeholders. Encouraging candid discussions on how the safer sport policy, guidance, and procedures will be developed and implemented.
- 4. Partnerships with experts:** Collaborating with experts in co-design to provide guidance and ensure the co-design process is a success.
- 5. Clear communication:** Providing regular updates on the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures development progress and actively engaging stakeholders in the decision-making process. Transparency in communication is crucial for building trust.
- 6. Recognizing contributions:** Acknowledging and appreciating the contributions of stakeholders in the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures development, reinforcing the sense of ownership and commitment.

### British Gymnastics

The British Gymnastics Safeguarding Policy was initially developed by a small, dedicated working group. This group engaged in extensive consultations with club and regional welfare officers, staff from the Welfare and Safe Sport team, senior leaders in gymnastics, gymnasts, coaches and official advisory groups, legal experts and external stakeholders. Through a thorough process of gathering comments and suggestions, the draft policy was refined and enhanced. The amended Safeguarding Policy was presented to the board for final approval.



# Accessible and clear

## What is the principle?

Making safeguarding in sport policy, guidance, and procedures accessible and clear ensures that they are understandable to all ages, all abilities and diverse backgrounds. This principle also emphasises the need to ensure the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures are available in a variety of formats to accommodate different learning styles and communication preferences.



## Why is this principle important?

This principle is key, because it ensures that no one is overlooked when it comes to safeguarding. Clear and accessible safeguarding in sport policy, guidance, and procedures guarantee that all individuals, including those from marginalised communities, are younger or older, or those living with a disability, are included in their design, implementation and evaluation. By making the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance, and procedures accessible, sports organisations demonstrate a commitment to equality, respect, and inclusion, fostering a culture that values and safeguards the rights of all those involved in the sport.

Additionally, providing the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance, and procedures in multiple formats enhances their impact and reach. Not everyone learns or communicates in the same way and offering the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance, and procedures in various formats such as audio, video, plain language, and translations widens its accessibility, making it more likely to be understood, internalised, and followed by a diverse audience.

## Examples of how to implement this principle:

- 1. Plain language:** Drafting the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures using clear and straightforward language that is easily understood by individuals. Consider engaging a provider to support with this process.
- 2. Multilingual versions:** Translating the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures into different languages to cater to communities with diverse linguistic backgrounds. Ensure translations are accurate and culturally sensitive.
- 3. Audio and visual formats:** Creating audio recordings and video summaries of the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures, making it accessible to individuals with visual impairments or learning disabilities.
- 4. Easy-to-read formats:** Developing easy-to-read versions of the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures with simple language and visual aids/pictures so that they are easy to read for children and diverse audiences.
- 5. Interactive online versions:** Offering online versions of the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance, and procedures with interactive features, allowing users to explore content in a way that suits their preferences.
- 6. User testing:** Conducting user testing with diverse groups to gather feedback on the clarity and accessibility of the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures and making improvements if necessary.

### British Rowing

British Rowing has updated their **Young Persons Guide to Understanding Our Safeguarding Policy** to include emoji-style images throughout, making it easier to read and more accessible.

The guide is written in a more conversational tone rather than using formal policy language, making it a more digestible resource. There are plans to review the guide with young people to ensure it remains clear and easy to use.

# Implementation-focused

## What is the principle?

Translating the safeguarding in sport concepts detailed within the policy, guidance, and procedures into tangible actions by placing an emphasis on planning, accountability, training, monitoring, and continuous improvement, all with the ultimate goal of creating a safer cultures and environments in sport.

## Why is this principle essential?

This principle is essential because it bridges the gap between the design of safeguarding in sport policies, guidance, and procedures and actual practice, ensuring that what is written in the safeguarding in sport policies, guidance, and procedures actually takes place on the ground in the sport. This principle is often overlooked and therefore, whilst many safeguarding in sport policies, guidance, and procedures are good in theory, they do not translate to practice.

Concentrating on implementation considerations whilst developing the safeguarding in sport policies, guidance, and procedures, will ensure that they will have a greater chance of success when being implemented.



## Examples of how to implement this principle:

1. **Develop an implementation plan:** Outlining an actionable implementation plan will ensure that the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance, and procedures become more than just words on paper but will transform into a roadmap for safeguarding in sport, providing clear guidelines and steps for all individuals within the sport to follow.
2. **Comprehensive communication plan:** Developing a structured communication plan that outlines how information about the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance, and procedures will be disseminated to various stakeholders including:
  - a. **Parent engagement:** Creating specific communication strategies to engage parents and guardians, explaining the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures and their role in safeguarding in sport.
  - b. **Athlete empowerment:** Creating specific communication strategies in conjunction with athletes to empower them to engage with the policy, guidance and procedures, will help to embed safeguarding in sport, and enable athletes to identify unsafe practices.
  - c. **Coaches, officials and staff:** Developing specific communication strategies specific to each group, understanding the best way to communicate with them, how they like to be communicated with and how the safeguarding in sport policies, guidance, and procedures apply to their role.
3. **Comprehensive training plan:** Developing a training and education plan that identifies the training needs of all stakeholders who will engage with the safeguarding in sport policies, guidance, and procedures including how they will receive the training and the outcomes that need to be achieved.
4. **Resource allocation:** Defining the financial, human and technical resources required to implement the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance, and procedures successfully at both operational and strategic level.
5. **Pilot testing:** Considering whether to pilot the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance, and procedures in specific areas before full-scale implementation to identify potential challenges and fine-tune the approach.



# Continuous improvement

## What is the principle?

A continual process of review, adaptation, and enhancement of the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance and procedures which demonstrates that creating a safer sports culture and environment is not a static achievement but a dynamic commitment to consistently improving safeguarding measures, reflecting changing circumstances, and incorporating emerging best practice.

## Why is this principle important?

This principle is essential as it acknowledges that the safeguarding landscape in sport is ever-changing. New challenges, insights, and technologies emerge over time that require responses. A continuous improvement approach ensures that the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance, and procedures remains relevant, effective, and responsive to the evolving needs of participants. By consistently evaluating and enhancing the safeguarding in sport policies, guidance, and procedures, sport organisations demonstrate a commitment to learning from experiences and staying ahead of potential risks. This not only maintains stakeholder trust but also fosters a culture of accountability, transparency, and proactive risk management.



## How can sports achieve this principle?

- 1. Regular review:** Scheduling regular reviews of the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance, and procedures, to assess their effectiveness, relevance, and alignment with emerging safeguarding standards and legal changes. Policies should be reviewed every 2-3 years unless immediate changes are required, whilst guidance and procedures should be updated more frequently.
- 2. Gathering feedback:** Obtaining feedback from stakeholders, including athletes, coaches, officials, parents, and experts, to identify areas for improvement and uncover potential blind spots.
- 3. Data analysis:** Analysing incident reports, safeguarding data, and trends to identify recurring issues and proactively address them in the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance, and procedures updates.
- 4. Benchmarking:** Comparing the safeguarding in sport policy, guidance, and procedures against industry standards and best practice to identify gaps and areas where improvements are needed.
- 5. Stakeholder engagement:** Involving relevant stakeholders in the review process to ensure diverse perspectives are considered and integrated.
- 6. Incorporating technology:** Leveraging technological advancements to enhance safer sport measures, such as implementing new reporting platforms or monitoring tools.
- 7. Education and training updates:** Keep education and training programs aligned with the latest safeguarding insights, ensuring that stakeholders are equipped with up-to-date knowledge.
- 8. Transparency in updates:** Clearly communicate safeguarding in sport policies, guidance, and procedures updates to all stakeholders, explaining the rationale behind changes and highlighting the sports' commitment to safeguarding in sport.
- 9. Documentation:** Maintain a detailed record of safeguarding in sport policies, guidance, and procedures revisions, updates, and the outcomes of continuous improvement efforts.







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