

# **Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults in Sport**

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## **May 2007**

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**Council Paper No: SC/07/xx**

**Preamble:**

Sport Northern Ireland (SNI) recognises its moral duty and legal obligation to protect children and vulnerable adults in sport through the creation and promotion of a safe environment which protects from abuse. Sport has a power to be a positive influence on children and vulnerable young adults, providing the supporting structures and sporting environment places welfare first.

Sport Northern Ireland would like to thank SportScotland and the NSPCC for their assistance in the development of this policy.

## **1.0 Policy Purpose:**

- 1.1 Sport Northern Ireland (SNI) recognises its responsibility in protecting children<sup>1</sup> and vulnerable adults<sup>2</sup> from abuse<sup>3</sup>. The policy is based on the recognition that all children and vulnerable adults have the right to protection from abuse regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, religious belief, nationality, sexual orientation, or disability. It is also recognised that the needs of children with disabilities and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account.
- 1.2 This policy ensures that Sport Northern Ireland and organisations in receipt of financial awards from SNI, operate within the relevant legislative framework, and to standards of best practice.
- 1.3 This policy encourages the stimulation and engagement of other organisations in ensuring a safe environment for children and vulnerable adults in sport.
- 1.4 The policy communicates that all staff have a responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate identified officer within Sport Northern Ireland, and that all suspicions and allegations of abuse and poor practice will be responded to appropriately.

## **2.0 Policy Aims**

- 2.1 The aims of the policy are to:
  - Ensure that children and vulnerable adults are provided with a safe sporting environment which is protected from abuse.
  - Enable all staff to make informed and confident responses to specific issues.

## **3.0 Policy Objectives**

- 3.1 Sport Northern Ireland will provide opportunities for children and vulnerable adults to take part in sport safely, whilst promoting good practice.
- 3.2 Sport Northern Ireland will document, promote and implement the appropriate procedures to safeguard the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and protect them from abuse.

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<sup>1</sup> A child is defined in The Children (NI) Order 1995

<sup>2</sup> A vulnerable adult is defined in the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (NI) Order 2003

<sup>3</sup> The term abuse is categorised as emotional abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, negative discrimination and bullying.

- 3.3 Sport Northern Ireland will respond to any allegations of misconduct or abuse of children and/or vulnerable adults in line with this policy and associated procedures, as well as implementing (where appropriate) the relevant disciplinary procedures.
- 3.4 Sport Northern Ireland will treat all children and vulnerable adults equally, and with respect and dignity.

#### **4.0 Monitoring & Evaluation**

- 4.1 Sport Northern Ireland will monitor, evaluate and review on a regular basis to ensure that progress is made.
- 4.2 Sport Northern Ireland will provide information to enable the analysis of the direct and indirect impact of the policy and associated actions on the protection of children and vulnerable adults in sport.
- 4.3 Sport Northern Ireland will ensure that the appropriate provision of data, targets and indicators are set and collated.
- 4.4 Sport Northern Ireland will monitor and review this policy in accordance with any changes to relevant legislation and guidance.
- 4.5 Sport Northern Ireland will monitor this policy following any issues or concerns raised, and review as appropriate.
- 4.6 Implementation of the policy will ensure that the protection of children and vulnerable adults in sport are monitored and evaluated effectively at all levels.