**Key Safeguarding Questions for Those Organisations Working with Children and Young People**

All organisations working with children and young people must have safeguarding policies and procedures in place and ensure these are adhered to.

The term safeguarding is intended to be used in its widest sense, encompassing the full range of promotion, prevention[[1]](#footnote-1) and protection activity. Effective safeguarding will: promote the welfare of children and young people; prevent harm occurring through early identification of risk and appropriate, timely intervention; and protect children and young people from harm when this is required.

Whilst protective safeguarding is led by the Health and Social Care Trusts (and the PSNI where a crime is alleged or suspected), **voluntary and community** organisations are at the forefront of preventative safeguarding.

Therefore, we wish to ensure all voluntary and community organisations will implement preventative measures by, for example:

* having robust recruitment and selection procedures in place to screen out unsuitable people;
* developing a code of behaviour for staff and volunteers to ensure they are clear about acceptable and unacceptable behaviours when working with children and young people; and,
* providing staff and volunteers with appropriate safeguarding children and young people training.

To assist voluntary and community organisations, The Safeguarding Children in Sport Strategic Group have summarised the 7 sections of Our Duty Care[[2]](#footnote-2) into 7 very basic questions that organisations should be able to answer positively before receiving any public funding.

We would recommend that these should be in place before an organisation receive public funding either directly from a Government Department or an Arm’s Length Body.

To assist Government Departments or an Arm’s Length Body assessing if an organisation has achieved the MINIMUM safeguarding standards, we have included 3 indicators for each question.

**Safeguarding Checklist**

1. **There is a written policy that demonstrates the organisation’s commitment to safeguarding children and young people and is available to all stakeholders.**

Yes □ No □ Pending □

**Indicators**

1. There is a written policy statement of the organisation’s intention to keep children and young people safe from harm.

2. There is reference to a review of the policy, at least once every 3 years.

3. The policy outlines how all involved in the organisation are informed about the policy, including children, young people, parents, staff/volunteers and management committee members

1. **The organisation consistently applies a thorough and clearly defined method of recruiting staff and volunteers in line with legislative requirements and best practice (including AccessNI checks).**

Yes □ No □ Pending □

**Indicators**

1. There is an application form that covers past work/volunteering with attached declaration form requesting information on previous convictions and investigations

2. Written references are sought (and followed up orally when necessary).

3. Where required, an appropriate AccessNI disclosure check is carried out.

1. **There are procedures in place for the effective management, induction, support, supervision, and relevant skills/safeguarding training of staff and volunteers.**

Yes □ No □ Pending □

**Indicators**

1. There is an induction process for staff and volunteers.

2. There is a probationary period for staff and a trial period for volunteers.

3. Relevant training is provided, appropriate to the post/role, including safeguarding training

1. **The organisation has clearly defined procedures for raising awareness of, responding to, recording and reporting concerns about actual or suspected incidents of abuse or harm.**

Yes □ No □ Pending □

**Indicators**

1. There is a written procedure outlining how staff and volunteers respond to,

record and report safeguarding children and young people concerns.

2. There is a system to communicate the reporting procedure to staff, volunteers, children, young people and parents.

3. There is a named Designated Officer and Deputy Designated Officer who have

responsibility for dealing with safeguarding children and young people concerns

which come to light within the organisation.

1. **There is a written Code of Behaviour which outlines the behaviour expected of all[[3]](#footnote-3) involved in the organisation.**

Yes □ No □ Pending □

**Indicators**

1. The Code of Behaviour outlines acceptable and unacceptable behaviours when working with children and young people

2. The Code outline behaviours to be avoided.

3. The Code of Behaviour outlines sanctions in the case of staff and volunteers

breaching the guidelines.

1. **The organisation has processes to share relevant information appropriately with parents, children, young people, staff, volunteers, and other agencies, including who the designated officer is and how to contact them.**

Yes □ No □ Pending □

**Indicators**

1. Appropriate information is gathered about children and young people attending

2. Consent forms are sought for all activities from those with parental

responsibility.

3. There is a clear statement on confidentiality and how information is shared

1. **The organisation adheres to guidelines that ensure the general safety and effective management of activities.**

Yes □ No □ Pending □

**Indicators**

1. There are procedures for recording and reporting accidents, incidents and near misses.

2. All staff and volunteers are qualified and competent in their role.

3. There are clear ratios for supervision of children and young people at various activities.

\*We acknowledge that at application stage many organisations may be working to develop or improve their safeguarding policy and procedures. However, these should be in place before final funding is awarded.

1. Prevention involves increasing public awareness of harm and its effects on children and young people and, where appropriate, equipping, empowering and/or supporting them to stay safe. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Keeping Children Safe: **Our Duty to Care**- Standards & Guidance for Safeguarding Children & Young People <https://www.volunteernow.co.uk/app/uploads/2022/05/Keeping-Children-Safe-Our-Duty-to-Care.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Parents, volunteers, instructors, officials, board members, staff, and children etc [↑](#footnote-ref-3)