

## **Events held in public parks and spaces: additional safeguarding considerations.**

This briefing is for anyone responsible for planning and running events for children, young people and adults in public spaces such as fields, parks and other spaces. It provides essential guidance for event organisers on how to address the particular challenges presented by these more open sites. This briefing should be read in conjunction with all other safeguarding policies and procedures.

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 or adult 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 those with any additional needs
  - 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 etc.)

#### **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 all) to help them find their way around the site/s
- Depending on the size 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.

## **Handover arrangements**

- A clear venue and system for the handover of children/young people to parents at end of event; stipulate that children leave as they arrive in groups unless it is pre-agreed with parents/guardians that older participants will travel home independently
- Arrangements to ensure that event staff stay until the last child/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
- Areas that provide 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 children/young people may wish to use static facilities (eg bouncy castles or playgrounds) in down times
- Ensuring that 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
- 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
- Inform parent/carers of the catering facilities and any associated costs or expectations
- 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 children/young people**

- In addition to usual ratios for adults to children/young people, ensure there is extra adult supervision where necessary
- Plan and use suitable group control measures (e.g. large groups split in small groups)
- Ensure both the children/young people and the adults managing them wear recognisable/identifiable clothing
- Ensure the children/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 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
- 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 children, young people and members of the public is appropriate
  - To motivate and encourage children/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:**

- 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 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 children/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.