

Safeguarding children and young people policy



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If you require this document in a different format, please contact
Info@activityalliance.co.uk.

Foreword

Activity Alliance exists to create a future where all disabled people feel they belong in sport and activity. Our strategy, *We all belong*, sets out our ambition to address inequality, amplify disabled people's voices, and ensure sport and activity genuinely meet people's needs. Safeguarding children and young people is fundamental to achieving this vision.

Disabled children and young people continue to face significant barriers to being active, including unsafe environments, exclusionary practices, and unequal power dynamics. For inclusion to be meaningful, safeguarding must be more than a set of procedures; it must be embedded in our culture, our partnerships, and the way we listen to and work alongside children, young people and their families.

This policy reflects our commitment to a child-centred approach, recognising disabled children and young people as individuals with rights, voices and lived experience that must be respected. Safeguarding is not about limiting opportunity or independence, but about creating the conditions in which children and young people can participate safely, confidently and on their own terms. It aligns with our strategic ambition to ensure that disabled people's lived experience shapes how sport and activity are designed, delivered and governed, from the earliest stages of life.

Creating safe, welcoming and inclusive environments is a shared responsibility. We cannot achieve this alone. It requires strong collaboration with partners, clear accountability, and a collective commitment to challenge poor practice and address inequality wherever it exists. Safeguarding is integral to building trust, strengthening partnerships, and driving the systemic change our strategy calls for.

This policy sets out how Activity Alliance, our staff, volunteers, partners and stakeholders will work together to safeguard children and young people, promote their wellbeing, and respond swiftly and appropriately when concerns arise. It sits alongside our wider safeguarding framework and reflects our values: we care, we unite, and we champion.

By embedding safeguarding into everything we do, we take a vital step towards ensuring that disabled children and young people not only have opportunities to be active, but experience sport and activity as safe, respectful and empowering spaces where they truly belong.

Adam Blaze

Chief Executive

Activity Alliance

Activity Alliance safeguarding policy

Activity Alliance work with many amazing organisations, groups, and individuals and we are at the centre of influential programmes for disabled people.

Our teams work across various specialisms driving change in disability, inclusion, and sport. However, the reality is that disabled people are the least active group in society and we all must do more to change this negative picture.

Safeguarding is a priority for Activity Alliance, and we are committed to promoting the safety and welfare of all disabled people involved in sport and activity. With this in mind, Activity Alliance have developed a comprehensive safeguarding policy, procedures, and good practice guidance to promote to everyone we support.

The aim of this is to ensure we all advocate for and promote the welfare of all children and young people and their rights to be protected from harm.

As part of that commitment, we have developed a comprehensive safeguarding policy, procedures and good practice guidance to promote to everyone we support. This enables partners, stakeholders, staff and volunteers to understand their safeguarding roles and responsibilities, including what to do if a safeguarding concern arises directly or indirectly. Concerns will be managed in line with government guidance, the law, and local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements led by safeguarding partners.

This policy applies to everyone engaged in the support, planning, commissioning and/or delivery of participation opportunities, sporting sessions or activities that involve children and young people, including staff, volunteers, contractors, consultants, partners and anyone acting on behalf of Activity Alliance.

Any activity promoted, endorsed, commissioned or run by Activity Alliance must comply with these policies and procedures and have proportionate safeguarding risk assessment and welfare planning in place. [You can download copies of our safeguarding policies and resources on the Activity Alliance website.](#)

Activity Alliance requires that safeguarding children and young people sits within a robust framework aligned to the [NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit \(CPSU\) Standards for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport](#), including CPSU guidance on safe sport events, activities and competitions, and [Sport England governance requirements](#).

- An overarching safeguarding policy, procedures and implementation plan.
- A safeguarding welfare plan for all activities.
- Guidance on prevention and best practice, including safe recruitment and vetting.
- Policy, procedures, and systems for responding to concerns.
- Codes of conduct - All staff, volunteers and partners must maintain appropriate professional boundaries with children and young people at all times. This includes behaviour in one-to-one situations, during travel, in changing environments, and in online or digital communication. Any behaviour that could be perceived as inappropriate, coercive or harmful is unacceptable and will be addressed in line with Activity Alliance procedures.

- A commitment to Inclusion, equity diversity.
- Training and development.
- Access to advice and support.

The external safeguarding environment for children and young people in sport and activity continues to develop nationally. In particular, *Working Together to Safeguard Children* was updated in 2026 and applies to voluntary, community and private sector organisations, including sports clubs and organisations. Across the sport sector, there is also growing emphasis on safe sport, earlier identification of harm, stronger management of concerns involving people in positions of trust, clearer safeguarding expectations for commissioned and partner delivery, and more explicit responsibilities in online and digital environments. Activity Alliance will continue to review and update its safeguarding framework in line with changes in legislation, statutory guidance, sector standards and emerging good practice.

Legal framework

This policy has been written with reference to the key legislation, statutory guidance and sector standards that seek to protect children, young people and adults at risk, and that shape safeguarding expectations for sport and activity organisations.

- [The Whyte Review](#) – independent review into the treatment of gymnasts and the wider duty of care and safeguarding culture required across sport.
- Children Act 1989
- [Human Rights Act 1998](#)
- [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1991](#)
- [Sexual Offences Act 2003](#)
- [Children Act 2004](#) – including Section 11 duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#)
- [Protection of Freedoms Act 2012](#)
- [Children and Families Act 2014](#)
- [Special educational needs and disability \(SEND\) code of practice: 0 to 25 years](#) – statutory guidance for organisations working with children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities.
- [Information sharing](#) – advice for practitioners and organisations on sharing information to safeguard children and young people.
- [Working together to safeguard children](#) – HM Government, **March 2026** (statutory guidance on multi-agency working to help, support and protect children, including expectations relevant to sports clubs and organisations).
- [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#) – including the PREVENT duty to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.
- [Positions of Trust guidance](#) – recognising that people in positions of trust in sport and activity, such as coaches and leaders, must not abuse that position and that organisations must respond appropriately to related concerns.

- [Online Safety Act 2023](#) – legislation setting out duties to protect children from online harm, including risks arising from digital platforms, online communication and virtual environments.
- [NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit \(CPSU\) Standards for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport](#) – the sector framework that underpins safeguarding expectations for sport and activity organisations.

The above policy should be read alongside our [safeguarding policies, procedures and good practice guidance found here on the Activity Alliance website](#).

Definition of children

Children/young people are defined as anyone aged under 18. Safeguarding children and young people, and promoting their welfare means protecting them from maltreatment, preventing the loss of their health and development. It also means ensuring that they grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

Children may experience harm in many ways, including through physical abuse, sexual abuse and exploitation, emotional harm and neglect. They may also be harmed through bullying (peer abuse, cyber, sexting and internet abuse), poor coaching, teaching practice or through circumstances in which they are living, such as domestic abuse, parents with mental health or substance abuse issues.

Deaf and disabled children may have additional needs that must be considered when planning safe activities as well as potentially facing additional risks of abuse. These needs may include:

- Access to facilities.
- Adapted or modified equipment.
- Inclusive coaching practices or aspects of the activity.
- Provision of trained staff/volunteers to support them.

[More information can be downloaded from the CPSU website](#).

What to do if you are worried about a child

Speak to the NSPCC if you are concerned about a child's welfare. Whether you want to report child abuse and neglect, or are not sure what to do, the NSPCC are there to listen, offer advice and support, and can take the next steps if a child is in danger.

The NSPCC helpline is currently operating between the hours of 10am and 4pm from Monday to Friday. However, you can also email help@NSPCC.org.uk at any time. It's free and you can remain anonymous.

[NSPCC](#)

Telephone: 0808 800 5000

Text: 88858

If you think a child is in immediate danger dial 999 straight away to contact the police.

[Activity Alliance](#)

If the concern is an allegation relating to an adult who is working/volunteering or used to work at any Activity Alliance activity, then you will still need to follow the [Activity Alliance Safeguarding reporting structure](#). You can also contact our safeguarding team using the details below:

Jannine Walker

Activity Alliance Lead Officer

Email: jannine@activityalliance.org.uk

Phone: 07725 273158

Lucy Smith

Activity Alliance Board Safeguarding Lead

Email: lucy@activityalliance.org.uk

Agata Sromecka

Activity Alliance Safeguarding support

Email: info@activityalliance.org.uk

Phone: 01509 227752

Helen Derby

Activity Alliance Deputy Officer

Email: helend@activityalliance.org.uk

Phone: 07764 291662

[Activity Alliance safeguarding principles](#)

The Activity Alliance Safeguarding policy is based on the following principles:

- The welfare of disabled children and young people is paramount, as the [Children Act 1989](#), the [Children Act 2004](#) and [Working together to safeguard children](#) make clear.
- All disabled people, regardless of age, ability, culture, gender, language, race, ethnicity, religious belief, nationality, social/economic status and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.
- All disabled people have the right to participate in sport and activities in an enjoyable and safe environment that takes account of their individual support, physical and or social development needs.

- Safeguarding at Activity Alliance actively supports disabled children and young people to feel they belong in sport and activity, by ensuring environments are safe, welcoming, respectful and inclusive.
- Disabled children and young people should be listened to, believed and taken seriously. Their views and experiences will be considered, where appropriate, in decisions that affect their safety, participation and wellbeing.
- Safeguarding includes identifying, challenging and addressing poor practice and low-level concerns early, to prevent harm and promote positive experiences.
- All incidents of suspected or alleged poor practice or abuse should be taken seriously, responded to swiftly and appropriately, and managed in line with local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and Activity Alliance procedures.
- Confidentiality will be upheld in line with Data Protection and Human Rights legislation, but our priority will be safeguarding disabled children and adults who may be at risk.
- The creation and promotion of a culture/environment in which children and young people are valued and their right to be safe is upheld.
- Ensure steps are taken to minimise risks of harm to children and young people involved in activities.
- Protect children and young people from the risk of radicalisation and extremism, recognising that safeguarding against these threats is part of the wider safeguarding duty.
- Work together with other organisations that have a responsibility for safeguarding and the protection of children and young people, including information sharing when concerns arise.
- Provide, champion and promote an environment that is healthy, safe and secure.
- Activity Alliance acknowledge and advocate that deliverers may require additional training and advice to ensure they include and safeguard deaf and disabled people appropriately.
- Activity Alliance recognises that deaf and disabled young people can be more vulnerable than other non-disabled children and young people and that they and their families may need more information and support.
- Some children and young people are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.
- Additional barriers can exist when detecting the abuse or neglect of disabled children and young people and can create additional safeguarding challenges that are sometimes not recognised, in particular:
 - Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury can relate to the child's disability or additional need without further exploration.
 - Disabled people have an increased likelihood of social isolation.
 - Disabled people are disproportionately impacted by bullying.
 - Disabled people have fewer outside contacts than non-disabled people.
 - Disabled people depend on others for practical assistance in daily living, including intimate care.
 - Some disabled people's speech and language communication needs may make it difficult to tell others what is happening.

- We are committed to using the [Activity Alliance ‘talk to me’ principles](#) throughout our safeguarding policies, procedures and good practice to support looking beyond standard demographics and creating a child-centred approach to safeguarding. This child-centred approach is fundamental to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child. A child-centred approach means keeping the child in focus when making decisions about their active lives and working in partnership with them and their families.
- Safeguarding responsibilities apply equally to online and digital environments. This includes virtual delivery, online meetings, social media, messaging platforms, photography and video sharing, and any digital communication involving children and young people. Activity Alliance expects all staff, volunteers, partners and contracted providers to apply appropriate professional boundaries, use approved communication methods where possible, undertake proportionate risk assessment for digital activity, and act promptly on any concerns relating to online safety, harmful content, contact, conduct or wider digital harm.

The [Activity Alliance talk to me report](#) outlines 10 principles that providers, organisations, deliverers and supporters can follow to help make their sport or activity more appealing to, and supportive of, disabled people.

Our responsibility

Activity Alliance is committed to creating a safeguarding culture where concerns, poor practice and low-level worries are identified, challenged and addressed early. Everyone involved in our work has a responsibility to act if something does not feel right. Raising concerns is viewed as a positive and necessary step in protecting children and young people and promoting safe, inclusive environments.

Activity Alliance is committed to a child and young person-centred approach to safeguarding. Activity Alliance will:

- Have a lead officer, deputies and board member for safeguarding.
- Ensure all staff and relevant volunteers undertake safeguarding training appropriate to their role, with enhanced training for those with designated safeguarding responsibilities, and refresher learning in line with current legislation, statutory guidance and CPSU expectations.
- Require all those working for, volunteering at, or attending Activity Alliance activities to sign up to the [Activity Alliance staff and volunteers code of conduct](#) and read the [Activity Alliance Event Welfare Plan](#).
- We require all those working, volunteering or who have contact with children and young people to be confident and aware to ensure risk of harm to children is minimal.
- Where concerns about a child or young person’s welfare arise, anyone working with, volunteering with, or otherwise having contact with children and young people through Activity Alliance must understand and follow the reporting process – please see ([Activity Alliance Responding to a Safeguarding Concern](#)). Concerns should be shared promptly within Activity Alliance and, where appropriate, with partner organisations and local

statutory agencies. Allegations or concerns involving someone who works with children, including concerns about a person in a position of trust, must be managed in line with relevant allegations management procedures and may require referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), the police, children's social care and/or the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

- We recognise our duty under the PREVENT strategy to safeguard children and young people from radicalisation. All staff, volunteers, and partners should be aware of the signs of radicalisation and know how to report concerns. Activity Alliance will provide access to PREVENT awareness training and ensure that safeguarding leads are equipped to respond appropriately to any concerns.
- Act against those who breach Activity Alliance policies.
- Ensure consistency and share good practice throughout Activity Alliance and the partners we support.
- Continue to review, monitor and update Activity Alliance safeguarding policies in line with legislation, statutory guidance, CPSU and sport sector standards, and emerging safeguarding practice.

Further information

The following websites all contain excellent support and resources to assist you with your learning and development.

[NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit \(CPSU\)](#)

A partnership between the NSPCC, Sport England, Sport Northern Ireland and Sport Wales. The Unit was founded in 2001 to work with UK Sports Councils, National Governing Bodies (NGBs), County Sports Partnerships (CSPs) and other organisations to help them minimise the risk of child abuse during sporting activities.

[Child Exploitation and Online Protection \(CEOP\)](#)

Dedicated to eradicating the sexual abuse of children. It specialises in reporting internet abuse and has training and support resources to help you with internet and other safety issues.

[Safe Network](#)

Provides information to any voluntary group, individual or organisation, once you register (it is free) you can download lots of resources to assist you in developing policies or guidance.

[National Association for People Abused in Childhood \(NAPAC\)](#)

Provides help and support for people who were abused in childhood.

Phone: 0808 801 0331

Email: support@napac.org.uk

[Ann Craft Trust \(ACT\)](#)

A national organisation, funded by Sport England collaborating with staff in the statutory, independent, and voluntary sectors in the interests of people with learning disabilities who may be at risk from abuse.

Phone: 0115 951 5400

Email: ann-craft-trust@nottingham.ac.uk

Hourglass

National organisation who aim to prevent the abuse of older people by raising awareness, encouraging education, promoting research, and collecting and disseminating information.

Phone: 0808 808 8141

Email: enquiries@wearehourglass.org

Carers Direct

If you are a carer, the helpline advisers can give you information to help make decisions about your personal support needs and the needs of the person you are looking after.

Phone: 0203 904 4520

Email: info@carersdirect.org

Rethink

For practical information and support around mental health.

Phone: 0808 801 8582

The Samaritans

Emotional support for people who are experiencing feelings of distress, despair or suicide.

Phone: 116 123

Email: jo@samaritans.org

Social Care Institute

Improves the lives of people of all ages by co-producing, sharing, and supporting the use of the best available knowledge and evidence about what works in practice.

Phone: 0203 840 4040

Email: info@scie.org.uk

Sport and Recreation Alliance

Provides useful information on among other things changes to legislation and guidance around safe recruitment, safeguarding adults.

Phone: 020 7976 3900

Email: info@sportandrecreation.org.uk

PREVENT Duty Guidance

The Prevent duty guidance outlines how specified authorities must safeguard individuals by having due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

Educate Against Hate – Practical advice and resources to protect children from extremism and radicalisation.

ACT Early – Advice and support for anyone concerned that someone they know may be at risk of radicalisation.