Section 2. Promoting Good Practice

The Youth Sport Trust aim is to create a culture where everyone feels confident to raise a legitimate concern without prejudice to their own position. Concerns about the behaviour of consultants, partners, employees or volunteers which may be harmful to a child in their care must be reported following the guidelines in Section 3 of this document.

The Youth Sport Trust acknowledges that good practice when dealing with children is essential. All employees and volunteers should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect children and to protect themselves from allegations. Best Practice expectations are detailed in the Code of Conduct and distributed at appointment and during event training. In addition, the following are common sense examples of good practice and how to create a positive culture when working for the Youth Sport Trust:

- treat all children equally with dignity and respect;
- always be publicly open when working with children (e.g. avoid private or unobserved situations);
- ensure that whenever possible there is more than one adult present during activities with children, or at least that you are in sight or hearing of others;
- give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism;
- be an excellent role model and provide an example of good conduct you wish others to follow – this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol whilst supervising children;
- maintain a safe and appropriate distance both emotionally and physically (e.g. it is not appropriate for an adult to have an intimate relationship with a child or to share a room with them);
- ensure that at events, adults should not enter a child’s room or invite children into their rooms unless in an emergency. If an adult is working in a supervisory capacity, they should only enter a child’s room when accompanied by another adult;
- respect a child’s right to personal privacy/encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour that they do not like;
- challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations/suspicions of abuse.

All people caring for children should never, except in emergency:

- spend excessive amounts of time alone with a child away from others;
- take children alone on car journeys, however short;
- take children to your home where they will be alone with you.

If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable, they should occur only with the full knowledge and consent of the child’s parents. Where someone has had to act outside the Youth Sport Trust’s guidance in an emergency, this should be reported to the Lead Safeguarding Officer via the safeguarding@youthsporttrust.org email address.

You should never:

- engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games;
- allow or engage in any inappropriate physical or verbal contact with children;
- allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged;
- make sexually suggestive comments to children, even in fun
- allow allegations of children to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
- do things of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves
- invite or allow children to stay with you at your home unsupervised
• allow bullying or bad behaviour by children
• allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking
• behaviour or make suggestive or derogatory remarks or gestures in front of children
• jump to conclusions about others without checking facts
• either exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues
• show favouritism to any individual
• believe ‘it could never happen to me’

If you accidentally hurt a young person, the young person seems distressed in any manner, appears to be sexually aroused by your actions, or misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done, report any such incident as soon as possible to another colleague and the Lead Safeguarding Officer and make a note of the incident/concern. Parents or guardians should be informed of the incident.

It is strongly recommended that you do not work completely alone with groups of young people.

2.1 Positions of Trust

All adults who work with children at the Youth Sport Trust are in a position of trust which has been invested in them by parents, the school and the child. This relationship can be described as one in which the adult is in a position of power and influence by virtue of their position.

Within the Youth Sport Trust most adults in a position of trust recognise that there are certain boundaries in their relationship with a child that must not be crossed in terms of the relationship with the child. Adults must not encourage a physical or emotionally dependant relationship to develop between the person in a position of trust and the child in their care. Although children aged over 16 years can legally consent to sexual activity, it is inappropriate and extremely poor practice for an adult to pursue a relationship with a child with whom they are in a position of trust. Whilst it may not be a criminal offence, it is treated very seriously by the Youth Sport Trust and may result in disciplinary action and in the event of a dismissal (employee) or permanent suspension (volunteer) – the individual will be referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for consideration. This could result in the adult being barred from working with children by the DBS.

All those in a position of trust should be aware that sending messages or images deemed inappropriate and/or sexually provocative by text, email, web-cam or other electronic media to children under 18 year of age is a breach of this policy and may be a criminal offence. In the case of a criminal offence, statutory agencies (Police, Children’s Social Care) will be contacted for advice, guidance and possibly referral.

2.2 Safe Recruitment of Staff and Volunteers

Youth Sport Trust have a responsibility to ensure all children are protected from harm and have the right to take part in sport in a safe, positive and enjoyable environment. Our safe recruitment procedures will enable the Youth Sport Trust to reduce the risk of the potential abuse of children.

When recruiting employees or volunteers all reasonable steps will be taken by the Youth Sport Trust to ensure suitable people are selected. The process for recruiting employees will be led by Youth Sport Trust Human Resources (HR) Department, the recruitment of volunteers will be led by specific Programme Managers of the Youth Sport Trust with support from HR.
The Process for Recruitment

- Job description and person specification is approved
- Job/role is advertised
- Online application form completed
- Interview or meeting held with prospective employee/volunteer (to ensure suitability to work with children)
- Check documents to confirm a person’s identity
- At least two references obtained for successful applicant
- Dependent on job/role a criminal record check will be completed e.g an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check
- Induction
- Training and supervision

The Youth Sport Trust requires any individual engaged in Regulated Activity or Regulated Work to undertake a criminal record check in order to work/volunteer with children. Depending on the nature of the role and the level of supervision the Youth Sport Trust will require either Enhanced or Enhanced with barred list checks. A criminal record check should be completed every three years. Any positive disclosures will be risk assessed and a decision will be made if an individual is suitable to take up their role. Further information about criminal record checks is available on the Youth Sport Trust website.

Good recruitment process is essential to ensure the best people are chosen for the roles they undertake. Official checks and vetting procedures are on their own, not enough to protect children. They are only part of a wider set of practices and an organisational culture which supports safe practice.

2.3. Training

It is essential that those working with children are appropriately experienced or mentored/supervised until they have gained experience. All employees and volunteers working with children will receive appropriate safeguarding and protecting children training to assist individuals to recognise their responsibilities with regard to their own good practice and ensure that correct procedures are followed, with refresher training at least every 3 years.

2.4 Supervision Ratios

Staff, volunteers and consultants working with children should not work in isolation. It is important to have the correct level of supervision to adequately supervise all participants and manage any issue or incident that may arise. At all sessions involving children at least two responsible adults will be present to supervise. Any employee, volunteer or consultant must feel confident in raising concerns if they find themselves placed in a position where they are expected to work alone and unsupervised.

For single sex groups, there must be at least one same gender member of staff. For mixed groups there must be at least one male and one female supervising adult.

The supervision ratios that must be adhered to as a minimum for looking after groups of children are as follow:
Participants who are aged under 18 years of age must not be included in the calculations for supervision ratios.

The level of supervision should take account of:

- the age and any disabilities or special requirements of any of the children;
- the activity being undertaken;
- the geography of the facilities being used (i.e. restricted access to sports venue);
- the ‘risk assessment’ of the activity and facility.

2.5 Facilities and venues used for Youth Sport Trust Activities

The Youth Sport Trust must ensure they have undertaken an adequate risk assessment on all facilities and venues used for any activities, regardless of ownership of that facility or venue. It is important the Youth Sport Trust recognise its responsibility for ensuring venues and facilities are fit for purpose. The outcomes of risk assessments may have an impact on the session planning. It is important risk assessments are done in advance and reviewed on a regular basis.

2.6 Communication

Communication (including e-communication) is critical to maintaining a safe environment, this includes information provided to teachers and in some cases parents/guardians, choosing the correct and appropriate method of providing information to children (email/phone to teachers/parents/guardians), as well as considering how to communicate in an emergency (mobile/landline). Messages relating to children, sent via telephone, emails and text should be via their teacher or parent/guardian. Direct personal communication with children should always be avoided unless in exceptional circumstances.

If information is being sent to children this should be sent to groups of children rather than individual children.

Social networking sites are not an appropriate route of communication with children and this method of communicating with children is not supported as a communication route by Youth Sport Trust.

The context of the communication should always be professional and the language used appropriate for the communication, avoid using slang words or text speak to try and ensure the communication is not mis-interpretated.

2.7 Photographic and Digital Images

Youth Sport Trust welcomes the taking of appropriate images of children at Youth Sport Trust events and has developed guidance for parents, employees and volunteers to enable suitable photographs to be taken. There are risks associated with the use of photographic images and Youth Sport Trust are committed to ensuring images are used appropriately.

No images should be taken at a Youth Sport Trust event without the necessary consent being obtained first, including information on how the images will be used, especially if this is on websites
and other publications. Please see the Photographic and Digital Images Guidelines for further information. This is also available on the Youth Sport Trust website www.youthsporttrust.org or on the internal intranet.

2.8 Youth Sport Trust residential and non-residential events that include children

Prior to an event a thorough risk assessment and customised Safeguarding Plan will be drawn up and circulated to all partners and agencies by the Safeguarding Lead at events. The Safeguarding Plan will prioritise the well-being of children participating in an event through minimising risks and stating clear safeguarding procedures. The Safeguarding Plan for any Youth Sport Trust events can be accessed on the relevant event web page or by emailing safeguarding@youthsporttrust.org.