
SHEFFIELD CHILDREN SAFEGUARDING PARTNERSHIP BOARD

GUIDANCE FOR BEST PRACTICE: SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN & VULNERABLE PEOPLE AT EVENTS

(Revised July 2019)



GUIDANCE FOR BEST PRACTICE: SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN & VULNERABLE PEOPLE AT EVENTS

Introduction

This guidance was produced in consultation with the Sheffield City Council PLACE Directorate, Children and Adult safeguarding services, the Sheffield DACT¹ and South Yorkshire Police.

Its purpose is to prioritise the safety of children and vulnerable people at the planning and operational stages of events in Sheffield and it is intended to support and advise the people responsible for managing events.

We aim to encourage the provision of a safe environment in which children and vulnerable people can work, perform or socialise and enjoy the diverse range of cultural, leisure and entertainment facilities Sheffield has to offer. We believe that by prioritising the safety of children and vulnerable people and taking a proactive, preventive approach towards harm, everyone may have a safe and enjoyable experience enabling our city to retain its excellent reputation for safe and exciting events.

¹ Drug and Alcohol Coordination Team

1.0 Background

This guidance was developed to provide a framework for events managers and service providers, to ensure that events operate in a consistent manner that promotes the safety of children and vulnerable people living in, or visiting Sheffield. This guidance supports Operators to comply with The Licensing Act 2003, under which they have a legal responsibility to protect children from physical, psychological and moral harm and to demonstrate due diligence towards safeguarding by developing the risk management process. This does not replace existing guidance and should be used in conjunction with other relevant guidance, to ensure delivery of best practice in relation to safeguarding at events, including:

- The Health & Safety Executive 'Event Safety' guidance; The Purple Guide ²;
- The Home Office 'Guidance Issued Under Section 182 of The Licensing Act 2003 [revised April 2018]³;
- The Sheffield City Council Statement of Licensing Policy and related guidance⁴;
- The Sheffield City Council Children & Young People's Directorate 'Children in Entertainment' Policy Document;
- The Sheffield City Council Byelaws on the Employment of Children 1998.

Organisations/operators should already have their own safeguarding policies and procedures in place; this guidance does not replace those and should be used in conjunction with existing policies and procedures.

With the exception of Appendix 4⁵, the term 'children' denotes all children and young people under the age of 18 years.

The term 'vulnerable people' includes adults who have invisible needs such as mental health needs, substance misuse, harmful gambling, autistic traits, sensory impairment, communication difficulties, learning difficulties, capacity needs, physical disabilities (*list not exhaustive*).

1.1 Potential risks to children and vulnerable people

The Guidance Issued Under Section 182 of The Licensing Act 2003 states that the protection of children from harm includes the protection of children from "moral, psychological and physical harm", and this would include the protection of children from too early an exposure to strong language and sexual expletives, for example, in the context of film exhibitions, or where adult entertainment is provided⁶." The risks to children and vulnerable people will vary depending upon the style and character of the event, the audience profile, the type of activities taking place, the age of the children, the capacity and needs of the vulnerable adults and whether or not they are accompanied and supervised by a responsible adult or carer. Potential risks include:

² <http://www.hse.gov.uk/event-safety>; www.thepurpleguide.co.uk chapter 20 and welfare handbook;

³ Section 2.22 – 2.32

⁴ Codes of Practice and Guidance Notes for the Establishment and Operation of Licensed Premises Under the Licensing Act 2003;

⁵ Appendix 4 refers to children of compulsory school age

⁶ Guidance issued under Section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003 revised 2018, Section 2.22 refers)

- sexual or criminal perpetrators;
- irresponsible or illegal consumption of alcohol;
- children or vulnerable adults witnessing, or being involved, in substance misuse;
- anti-social behaviour;
- accidental harm;
- bullying, humiliation, coercion;
- financial exploitation;
- children or vulnerable adults who are unaccompanied/unsupervised;
- risks in relation to children involved in employment, entertainment or performance;
- children or vulnerable adults witnessing, or being involved with inappropriate or dangerous adult behaviour (violence, aggression, verbal or physical abuse or harm).

1.2 Audience

The guidance is designed for the use of Sheffield City Council (SCC) employees who are involved in the management of licensed events and for their partner agencies, contractors, promoters and volunteers. It may also be used by event managers involved in the provision of unlicensed or private events, or at high capacity venues, if the type of entertainment or activities fit into the event profiles identified in the risk assessment tool.

1.3 Contractors

'Partner Providers' must be obliged by the terms of their contract to act with reference to this guidance and Event Managers must monitor compliance.

2.0 Risk Management for the protection of children and vulnerable people from harm

In order to demonstrate a sense of legal and social responsibility towards safeguarding children and vulnerable people and in line with existing legislation, policy and guidance, a safeguarding risk assessment must be undertaken prior to each event. There is a risk assessment tool attached to this guidance at Appendix 1 to assist the process of identifying potential risks to children and vulnerable people, to decide the necessary type of protective control measures to be operated. This tool must be used in conjunction with existing health and safety and other relevant risk assessment procedures.

It should be noted that children must be protected from potential harm during their involvement in entertainment or employment under the legislation guiding The Sheffield City Council People Portfolio's 'Children in Entertainment' policy document and the Sheffield City Council Byelaws on the Employment of Children 1998. It is a statutory requirement that the necessary permits/licences are obtained from the Council⁷ prior to a child being employed or involved in the provision of performance or entertainment at an event. As this is a mandatory duty this is not included as an optional safeguarding measure in the risk assessment tool.

Whilst the issue of safeguarding children and vulnerable people is paramount, it should be noted that effective risk management processes also contribute to the promotion of Sheffield's reputation as a city providing safe, attractive, family-friendly leisure and entertainment facilities for residents and visitors to the city.

⁷ SCC CYPF Guidance refers see Appendix 4 to this guidance

3.0 Children and vulnerable adults who are unaccompanied, lost or unsupervised

Circumstances may arise in which children or vulnerable people, who are without the supervision of an accompanying adult, must be temporarily supervised by event staff. In such circumstances, the protocol⁸ should be followed and written records should be retained to account for all actions taken to reunite the child/vulnerable person with the responsible adult/carer, or to otherwise safeguard the child/vulnerable person.

4.0 Vetting individuals

Staff assigned to the role of 'Safeguarding Coordinator' must be adequately trained and have the necessary expertise to undertake this role⁹. If event staff have responsibilities that bring them into private/one to one contact with children/vulnerable people, or if they have supervisory responsibilities in relation to children's activities, a DBS certificate is required.

DBS checks, or other vetting procedures such as written and authenticated references, may be required for individuals if, for example, they are involved in the provision of children's tuition, sport activities, or children's entertainment, or in compliance with the Operating Licence Agreements issued by SCC.

Safeguarding arrangements must be in place to ensure that staff/volunteers who are not DBS checked are not working unsupervised with children/vulnerable adults; this may include staff working in pairs.

5.0 Information and welfare in relation to children and vulnerable adults

Events should be planned and operated in compliance with the recommendations of the Safeguarding Coordinator who should undertake a written risk assessment, the outcome of which should be incorporated into the event manual, clearly setting out what risk management systems and procedures are in place and lines of accountability. The event manual should state the contact details of the Safeguarding Coordinator and clarify lines of responsibility for safeguarding at the planning and operational stages of the event. To assist the Safeguarding Coordinator to establish clear procedures and communication pathways, a sample model of care is attached to this guidance at Appendix 5. This safeguarding infrastructure may be adapted for smaller events and roles may be duplicated if appropriate.

If the children's risk assessment identifies the event as 'amber' or 'red'¹⁰, the event should be attended by a manager designated to act as the 'Safeguarding Coordinator'. This role may be assigned to staff who have relevant additional functions, such as the Safety Officer. All staff at events must be informed of the identity and location of the Designated Safeguarding staff and know who the Safeguarding Coordinator is, so that they are easily able to contact that person should a safeguarding issue arise.

The designated **Safeguarding Coordinator is a specialist welfare role** and staff assigned to this role must be trained in the principles of risk assessment and be competent in carrying out that task¹¹.

⁸ At Appendix 2 of this guidance

⁹ This role is explained at Appendix 3 of this guidance

¹⁰ Risk assessment tool at Appendix 1 refers

¹¹ Competence includes an ability to ensure that all staff/volunteers working at the event have the necessary training, experience, expertise and other qualities to carry out the work safely and effectively and that, where necessary, specialist advice is accessible.

In line with the HSE event safety guidance, the Purple Guide and in the spirit of this guidance and The Guidance Issued Under Section 182 of The Licensing Act 2003 to promote a sense of legal and social responsibility at events, it is recommended that information should be made available to the public about welfare issues including: flyers/signage to remind adults of their responsibilities in relation to children; responsible drinking, advice leaflets on sexual health, substance misuse or other health issues (eg healthy eating advice; counselling services).

Information should also be provided such as public transport timetables, maps highlighting meeting points and designated family areas, the /first aid facility and welfare tent. Local outreach services should be promoted and information materials be provided by local agencies such as the Safeguarding Partnership Board (Licensing Project¹², Sexual Exploitation Service, Sexual Health, SCC Trading Standards and Adult and Young People's Substance Misuse Services).

6.0 Managing substance misuse at events

It is the responsibility of the Event Management Team to consult with the Police, Safety Advisory Group and other relevant agencies, to determine how substance misuse will be responded to at the event. While a 'zero tolerance to drugs' policy will likely operate in terms of bringing drugs into the event area, a harm reduction approach should be taken to supporting all people who are attending the event, to keep them safe whatever they may be using. In the 'Local Strategic Response – Drug Strategy 2018-2022' work is ongoing in Sheffield to promote **harm reduction approaches to large music/festival** events in the city, as an alternative to zero tolerance approaches which increase the risk of incidents. This is being explored throughout the 4 year period of the drug strategy's implementation. However, there are easily adoptable harm reduction approaches that can be taken now (see Appendix 8) to keep people at events as safe as they can be.

Sheffield has a vibrant night time and music economy, and significant numbers of people go out to music and dance events on either a regular or occasional basis. This includes large events. It is commonly acknowledged, that often people consume alcohol and illicit drugs when attending events. Venues often have a zero tolerance approach, which may be manageable within a controlled environment or enforced prior to admittance. However, at an outdoor event or once people have gained entry, ensuring these venues are completely drug free is unrealistic and has the potential to result in unintended consequences. For example: - **people may be encouraged to frontload their drug use and consume much higher quantities before entrance to a venue (Druglink 2013)**. Therefore, the Sheffield DACT^[1] seeks to ensure the welfare and safety of people attending events in the city by taking a 'safety first' approach. The provision of harm reduction advice is crucial in safeguarding and the measures outlined in Appendix 8 to this guidance can assist in reducing the potential risks of substance misuse activity at events.

¹² Children's Charter

^[1] Drug and Alcohol Coordination Team

This guidance was first published in June 2008 and has been used in Sheffield since. It was revised in September 2018 in response to on-going partnership work including events managers, promoters and staff across the sectors and attendance at Safety Advisory Group meetings.

We continue to invite feedback about the quality of this guidance and welcome the opportunity to improve it.

If you would like to comment about the content or effectiveness of the Guidance, or wish to make suggestions for its improvement, please let us know by sending your comments to:

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