



**BRITISH  
TRIATHLON**

# **BRITISH TRIATHLON GUIDE TO SAFEGUARDING AND EVENT WELFARE**



**TRIATHLON  
ENGLAND**



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SCOTLAND**



**WELSH  
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CYMRU**



**TRIATHLON  
TRUST**



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## Introduction

Event Organisers have a responsibility to take all reasonable steps to ensure that their event provides as safe an environment as possible, where welfare is paramount. All individuals, regardless of gender, age, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, disability, culture and religious belief systems have a right to be protected from abuse and enjoy safe sporting events.

Everyone involved in the event (including parents/guardians) need to be aware of and understand their safeguarding responsibilities. Everyone needs to feel safe and know where to go for help when required. Event Organisers should have a plan in place for event safeguarding and welfare which is distributed and understood by all.

The information in this guide is based on the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) “Safe Sport Events, Activities and Competitions” guidance. Further information can be found on the [NSPCC website](#).

## Safeguarding and Welfare Policy and Plan

Event Organisers should have a safeguarding and welfare policy or policy statement which outlines their commitment to keeping people safe and prioritising welfare. This policy should be accompanied by a plan which describes how policy will be delivered.

The policy/policy statement should;

- Identify who the organisation is and its purpose/function
- Detail the values of the organisation
- Identify who the policy applies to
- Explain the rationale for the procedures developed from the policy
- State the organisations commitment to safeguarding and welfare

The plan should;

- Identify what needs to be completed so the policy is delivered
- Identify who is responsible for each action

A policy/policy statement and plan template can be found [here](#).

Every event that is permitted through British Triathlon is required to carry the Safeguarding and Welfare Commitment Statement. This statement highlights the Event Organisers commitment to the event in line with British Triathlon's guidelines. This should be publicised in pre-race information as well as on site at the event. The Safeguarding Commitment Statement can be seen below.

*This permitted triathlon event acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. This permitted triathlon event is also committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice and British Triathlon requirements.*

## Responsibilities

Everyone has responsibility for safeguarding and we must act if there are concerns about potential abuse. Doing nothing is not an option. All concerns must be taken seriously.

Everyone must;

- Take all concerns seriously.
- Listen carefully if someone tells you something that causes you concern and report it immediately.
- If you see/hear anything yourself which causes you concern, report it immediately.
- Ensure you know how and who to report any concerns to.
- Where possible you should record any detail you can.

As everyone has a responsibility for safeguarding, this information should be distributed to everyone at the event. There are some specific roles that have additional responsibilities.

### Event Organiser

The Event Organiser has overall responsibility for organising and delivering the event. The Event Organiser should have undertaken basic safeguarding awareness training.

Responsibilities of the Event Organiser include:

- Ensure that all competitors, spectators and event team are safeguarded
- Being ultimately responsible for safeguarding, health and safety matters, and for ensuring that the duty of care towards competitors, spectators and the event team is fulfilled
- In partnership with the Safeguarding Officer, ensuring that an event safeguarding plan is developed, distributed and effectively implemented undertaking or delegating a pre-event risk assessment, including site facilities
- Ensure planning includes:
  - Staffing levels, safe recruitment and training
  - Medical/first aid provision
  - Obtaining details for local medical, police and Local Authority Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and or British Triathlon Safeguarding Lead
  - Registration and permission arrangements
  - Sign up to codes of conduct for participants and event staff
  - All volunteers and event staff are aware of how to recognise, report, refer and record safeguarding concerns. Further information can be found [here](#)
  - Training event staff and volunteers to understand how to protect themselves such as avoiding one to one contact with children

### Some additional safety rule requirements for children's events:

- Cycling and running must take place on roads closed to vehicular traffic
- Fluids must be made available during the run segment and at the finish
- Competitors must be visible to marshals at all times
- Maximum distances must be adhered to
- No family, friends or helpers are allowed in transition when the race is in progress
- Children and adults should not race on the same course at the same time

For all rules for children please refer to the [British Triathlon Competition Rules](#).

## Safeguarding Officer

A nominated Safeguarding Officer must be present at all events. Their name, contact telephone number and location must be clearly displayed at the event as well as being contained within the event pre-race information. Where possible reminders of this should be communicated via the PA system to ensure awareness within the event site, especially detailing where the Safeguarding Officer is in case of an issue.

This person will have lead responsibility for safeguarding and should have undertaken an approved Safeguarding Awareness course. In some circumstances, this role may be taken on by the person with overall responsibility for the event.

Responsibilities of the Safeguarding Officer include:

- Being responsible for safeguarding competitors and spectators at the event
- Developing, distributing and implementing the event safeguarding plan
- Undertaking a pre-event risk assessment, including site facilities
- Receiving, responding to and managing any safeguarding issues that arise at or following the event
- Ensuring that all event staff and volunteers understand their safeguarding responsibilities and know how to respond if concerns or allegations arise. This can be completed through basic safeguarding awareness/event training or briefings
- Ensuring that competitors are registered at the event and wherever possible parental consents are obtained in line with the event safeguarding plan
- Knowledge of and contact for Local Authority Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and or British Triathlon Safeguarding Lead

## Event Staff & Volunteers

Other staff and volunteers involved in the event should:

- Receive the appropriate level of safeguarding training and event briefing
- Understand their safeguarding responsibilities and what to do in the event of a safeguarding concern arising
- Familiarise themselves with the event safeguarding plan and appropriate lines of communication
- Read, sign up to and comply with the relevant event code of conduct

## Reporting Concerns

Everyone involved in delivering any type or size of event should know what to do if a safeguarding concern comes to their attention.

The responsibility of the Event Organiser or their event team is not to decide whether abuse or harm has occurred. Their responsibility is to respond appropriately to any concerns that arise by referring these concerns to the relevant agency and/ or contact.

### How might you become aware of a concern or potential abuse?

- You may see something which is concerning or doesn't look right
- You may hear something that worries you
- You may be told something which concerns you
- A child or adult may disclose to you

## Responding to concerns or disclosures

Everyone needs to be aware of and follow the correct reporting procedures. Where there are concerns you should; **Record, act and never assume.**

Do

- Stay calm
- Reassure the individual
- Follow confidentiality procedures - this includes telling the individual that you may have to inform others to help stop the potential abuse
- Ensure the safety of the individual
- Record any concerns you have, report these to the Safeguarding Officer

Don't

- Rush into actions that may be inappropriate
- Express your emotions and or make promises. Don't guarantee promises you cannot keep
- Take sole responsibility - ensure that you consult, refer and pass on appropriately
- Speculate or make assumptions
- Interview the child or adult or probe them for detailed information. Ascertain basic information in order to pass the concern on
- Clarify what is being said to you, use open ended questions
- Make a promise to keep something secret
- Investigate any concerns yourself

## Procedure for responding to concerns or disclosures

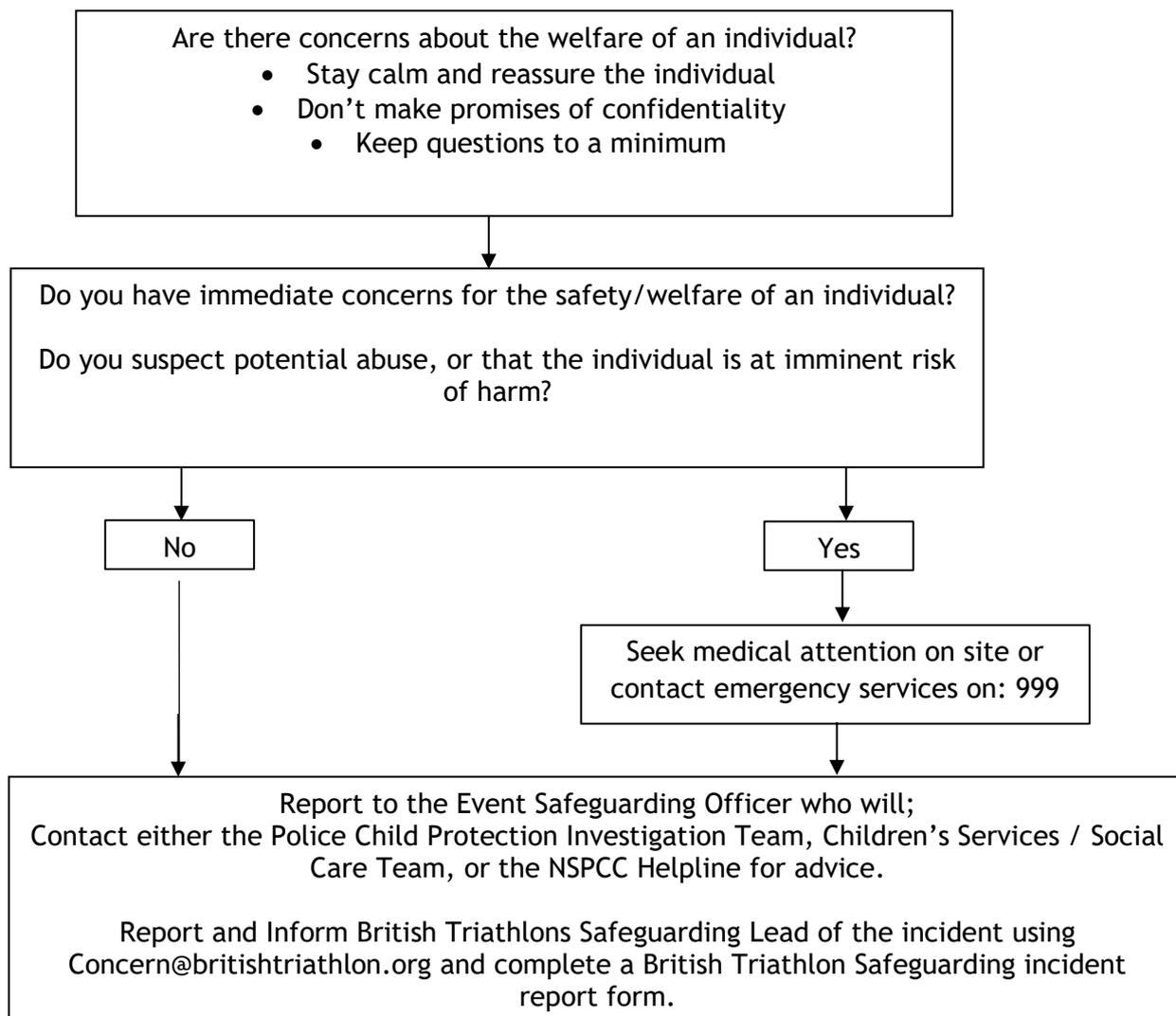
Event staff, volunteers, participants, parents/carers or spectators should:

- Inform the Safeguarding Officer  
If the concerns relate to this person, contact should be made directly with the local statutory agencies, British Triathlon Safeguarding Lead or call the NSPCC on 0808 800 5000
- Make a detailed note of what you have seen or heard but don't delay in passing on the information

The Safeguarding Officer should:

- Ensure the immediate safety of the individual, including making a decision and acting to immediately exclude the individual from the event
- Contact local statutory agencies directly, the British Triathlon Safeguarding Lead or call the NSPCC on 0808 800 5000
- Make a detailed note of what has been reported
- If not already, report and inform British Triathlon's Safeguarding Lead of the incident using [Concern@britishtriathlon.org](mailto:Concern@britishtriathlon.org) and complete a British Triathlon Safeguarding incident report form.

## Reporting Flowchart



## Risk Assessment

Assessing the risks at any event is essential, even if the event has been successfully delivered before. In addition to an event risk assessment when health & safety is considered, a risk assessment for safeguarding and event welfare should be undertaken to review specific concerns relating to safeguarding and welfare. The areas outlined in the following information apply to any event and the Event Organiser needs to take responsibility for assessing each concern. All events permitted by British Triathlon (or any of its Home Nations) require the submission of a Safeguarding and Welfare risk assessment, outlining the control measures that will be put in place to mitigate against identified risks to an acceptable level.

Event Organisers need to consider the following;

### Missing / lost individual

Unfortunately, individuals do sometimes go missing during events. It is therefore essential that Event Organisers have plans and procedures in place to provide clear guidance on how event staff and volunteers should respond in these circumstances. This information must be communicated in advance.

There should be a procedure in place to locate the individual before the concern is escalated to the emergency services. It is recommended that 20 minutes is the maximum amount of time an Event Organiser should wait before contacting the emergency services. An example procedure can be found [here](#).

### Competitors, spectator and volunteer behaviour

A code of conduct can set an expected level of behaviour at an event. A code of conduct should outline good practice and ethical conduct which should be followed by all. Copies should be displayed clearly at all events and communicated in the pre-race information. Where these are displayed event, Event Organisers have a route of redress should any incidents arise on site for example, unacceptable/challenging behaviour by a parent. An example code of conduct can be found [here](#).

### Suitable race distances for children

British Triathlon have set maximum distances for children based on research on the physiological and psychological development and maturity of a child. Ensuring that distances for children's events meet the British Triathlon Competition Rules ensures children are safe and can enjoy the event. The British Triathlon Competition Rules can be found [here](#).

Where multiple children races take place, different coloured race numbers/wrist bands are recommended to identify competitor age to ensure the right course and distance is completed. This can be particularly helpful with lap counting where a lapped course is in place.

## Permission

Children must have permission to take part in an event and Event Organisers should record what steps have been taken to gain permission and the safeguards in place when they have proceeded without it.

For all children under the age of 16, parental/guardian permission must be obtained. Due to the nature of event entry online and advanced payment for an event, initial parental/guardian permission can be assumed through a child entering an event. However, British Triathlon recommend that permission is further obtained by a parent/guardian being present at the event at registration. Where a parent/guardian is unable to attend the event with their child, written/signed permission must be obtained. An example form can be found [here](#). Without written/signed permission it is recommended that a child does not compete in the event.

For young people aged between 16 and 17 there is assumed autonomy over decision making and therefore parental/guardian permission is not required to be sought.

For individuals over the age of 18 no permission is required as they are legally an adult and have autonomy for their own decisions.

It is recommended that Event Organisers detail their approach to permission within their event terms & conditions and pre-race information to ensure that everyone is aware in advance of the event. Event Organisers should include a health and fitness declaration and agreement to receiving emergency medical treatment within their event terms & conditions.

## Medical information

Medical/disability information and emergency contact information should be collected in advance of the event. Individuals should be asked to provide information about any disability or medical condition which may arise during the event. Event Organisers should speak to any individuals declaring medical/disability information in advance of the event where reasonable adjustments may need to be made. Individuals and/or parents/guardians must provide sufficient medication for the duration of the event and agree how this will be held and administered for example, by the individual, by an identified member of the event staff or by the parent/guardian if present. This can be agreed be communicating in advance.

## Venue access

All event staff should be provided with a means of identification. Identification could be colour coded t-shirts, wrist bands and/or team kit. At larger events it may be deemed appropriate for this to be rolled out to all competitors as well.

Any identification which is adopted should always be visible and managed. Where practical this should include a photograph of the individual.

For larger events areas should be zoned into accreditation only access areas which should be marshalled by trained event staff. This will allow for only suitably trained and vetted personnel access to areas where competitors are unsupervised or there are other significant risks.

## Communication

Suitable communication should be in place for all event staff. All event staff should know who and how to report concerns and/or incidents. All communications and access should be outlined within the event plan and communicated to all event staff before the event.

Two way radios should only be used for general communication purposes. Mobile phones should be used by event staff responsible for receiving and responding to safeguarding reports. These phones should be used for confidential issues. Where mobile phones are used a contact list should be provided. All the event staff should be provided with the relevant contact number(s).

## Ratio of supervisors to children

In planning and running events for children and young people, it is important to consider the appropriate supervision ratio of adults to children/young people. This will minimise any risks to competitors, enhance the benefits they draw from the event, reassure parents/carers and provide some protection for those responsible for providing the activity in the event of any concerns or incidents arising.

Anyone undertaking the supervision role should have been recruited and vetted for suitability and understand their role and responsibilities.

The ratio of supervisors to children/young people will depend on a number of factors:

- age
- gender
- behaviour
- abilities within the group
- nature and duration of the activities
- competence and experience of event staff involved
- requirements of location, accommodation or organisation
- any special medical needs
- specialist equipment needed

Regardless of the overall supervision ratio agreed, at least two adults should always be supervising children/young people.

## Information for competitors, spectators, event staff and volunteers

It is essential to provide everyone at an event with safeguarding information appropriate to their role in a suitable format.

Everyone should be clear about:

- how they are expected to behave at the event
- their safeguarding responsibilities, including a duty to report concerns
- the types of concerns that will require a response
- to whom and how concerns should be reported
- sources of support

Event Organisers should integrate relevant information into the pre-event information, any training and/or event briefings taking place. Event Organisers should display information at the event and make information available online in a language and format appropriate to the competitor, spectator and/or event staff member/volunteer.

## Training

The Safeguarding Officer should ensure that all event staff and volunteers understand their safeguarding responsibilities and know how to respond if concerns or allegations arise. This can be completed through basic safeguarding awareness/event training, via the pre-race information and/or at the event briefing.

The Safeguarding Officer must be adequately trained in Safeguarding practices as they will require a greater understanding of safeguarding and the management of concerns and/or incidents.

Approved providers include:

- [UK Coaching](#) (Sports Coach UK)
- [NSPCC](#)

Your Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCBs) which are associated with your local council.



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