

WDSL CODE OF PRACTICE

HEALTH AND SAFETY OF YOUNG PEOPLE

Every potential and existing WDSL player should be able to participate in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from any form of abuse. The WDSL recognises and accepts its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all young people and children by protecting them from physical, emotional or sexual harm and from bullying and neglect. It is determined to meet these obligations to ensure that all those in the WDSL who provide opportunities for children and young people do so, to the highest possible standard of care.

This code of practice has been produced as clear guidance to ensure the health and safety of children and young people at any WDSL Team events. Events include development and selection courses, and all Tournaments. This includes those events where all players are under the age of eighteen and also senior events where young players are included.

Introduction

The health and safety of all children and young players under 18 and involved in any activity run by the WDSL is of paramount importance.

Responsibilities - Away Trips

The WDSL will appoint a Head of Delegation who is responsible for the safety of young players at all times and for every aspect of the Event. The Head of Delegation must:

- § Have experience in supervising players of all of the age groups participating in the Event
- § Ensure that all staff have complied with the WDSL staff screening requirements
- § Be capable of organising the Event, staff and players effectively
- § Ensure that all coaches are qualified for the work allotted to them
- § Complete a Risk Assessment form for each Event
- § Appoint a Designated Person for Child Protection who is responsible for all child protection issues and the general well being of players under 18. Reference should be made to Best Practice Guidelines.
- § Complete and submit the Event Report Form.

Appointed staff are responsible to the Head of Delegation and must:

- § Have appropriate knowledge of the WDSL / FAI child protection and best practice guidelines
- § Be aware of their specific responsibilities at all times throughout the Event
- § Have completed and returned Staff Personal and Medical Consent Forms
- § Have complied with all WDSL vetting and screening procedures

Risk Assessment

The Head of Delegation must carry out a Risk Assessment for the Event. He / she must consider potential hazards and what safety measures should be taken to avoid them and produce a contingency plan. He / she should consider what will be done in the event of a serious accident, injury or emergency.

No amount of planning can guarantee a safe and incident free trip but good planning and attention to safety measures can reduce the likelihood of serious incidents. Check travel, venue, staffing, weather and catering arrangements for possible dangers and put in place safety and emergency procedures. If players are allowed to swim or be involved in any water activity while on the Event, including the use of pools for rehabilitation work, the Head of Delegation must establish the swimming competence of each player. The Head of Delegation must arrange appropriate lifeguard supervision.

If the Event is to involve experience of adventure or other high risk activity and a specialist provider is engaged, the Head of Delegation must obtain written confirmation from the provider that a current licence issued by the appropriate Licensing Authority is held for the activity in question. The Head of Delegation must check that the insurance covers these activities both at home and abroad.

Advance Visit

Unless previously visited by or otherwise known to the Head of Delegation or appointed staff, the Head of Delegation or appointed staff should visit the Event venue(s) in advance. The Head of Delegation should check arrangements for travel, accommodation (including food and drink), playing, training and medical facilities, communications, laundry and opportunities for recreation.

The Events Plan

The Head of Delegation / Event Administrators plans must include consideration of the:

- § Age of players
- § Nature of Event, particularly if non soccer activities are involved
- § Ratio of staff to players (a minimum of 1:8)
- § Qualifications and experience of Staff
- § Description and rota of Staff duties including designation of Staff to carry and use first aid equipment
- § Medical, educational and / or other special needs of individual players
- § Travel arrangements
- § Contingency measures for exceptional circumstances
- § Insurance
- § Communication arrangements
- § Emergency procedures
- § Designation and briefing of the Designated Person for Child Protection if other than the Head of Delegation
- § Other people who may visit the Event
- § Any other person invited to attend the Event

Medical Support and Equipment

One member of Staff must be qualified in first aid, should be responsible for the appropriate first aid equipment and for it being available to them at the Event and for treating young players at the Event. All Staff must know how to contact the emergency services and a working mobile phone must be carried with the group at all times. Parents / Guardians should be informed as soon as possible if their child suffers a significant injury or accident. Injuries should be recorded, with a note of action taken in relation to each one. It is recommended that an accident / incident book be maintained with a specific incident form to be completed by staff / leaders.

Supervision Arrangements

The staff to children ratio will depend on:

- § The risk assessment
- § The age of the players: one staff member to 10 players is recommended for players over 11. More staff are recommended for groups of younger children, whether they are single or mixed sex groups. If mixed there should be at least one male and one female.
- § Extra staff may be required if there are children with special needs or disabilities or if the squad includes any player who has been a management problem in the past and who may need close supervision.

The minimum number of Staff, with the exception of remote supervision, at any time during the Event, must be a ratio of 1 member of Staff to every 10 players. The Head of Delegation must communicate with Staff to inform them of their exact supervisory responsibilities and ensure that these responsibilities are clearly understood by the members of Staff. The Head of Delegation must ensure that there is a designated person for Child Protection. All players must be made aware as to whom is to carry out this role at the beginning of the Event.

All Staff must have access to a list of the names of players at the Event and access to the Emergency Procedures.

Members of Staff are advised not to be left alone with a child or young person - See Code of Practice for Coaches. Medical Staff will adhere to Good Practice Guidelines when treating children or young people. The Head of Delegation and appropriate staff should liaise in relation to young people who might need closer supervision and / or support.

Roll calls should take place frequently and must be made before the group leaves a venue. Players must be given rendezvous points and told what to do if they become separated from the group. Players should be provided with the address and telephone number of their accommodation, which they will be advised to carry with them.

During Players free time, Staff will continue to supervise players. This should be explained to the Players including remote supervision. Where groups are of mixed gender, there must be a minimum of one male and one female member of staff.

Players at an Event must be easily identifiable and should wear designated kit, unless the Event Leader is advised otherwise. Players should not wear name badges unless these are specifically required by a Tournament or Festival Organiser. All Players are advised to carry the phone number of the Group Mobile Phone.

During the time away, make sure you consider the following:

- § The need for daily briefings to discuss the day's events, problems and future planning. Provide an opportunity for players to speak alone with staff if necessary. Although private, remember this should always be in view, not behind closed doors.
- § The need for daily staff meetings to review, plan and troubleshoot. It is important to deal with problems (e.g. any conflict within the group, poor behaviour) as early as possible.

After the trip, you should hold a staff debrief session to discuss what went well, what did not go so well, what you have learnt and to make recommendations for further trips.

Travel

- § Where cars, minibuses and coaches are fitted with seat belts, Players are required to use them.
- § Staff members should not travel alone with a young person unless it is unavoidable. If travelling by car the Player should sit in the rear seat.
- § A driver of a vehicle who is not a member of Staff carrying a young person should not be given responsibility for their supervision.
- § In the case of vehicles hired with a driver, the hire contract must be with an approved WDSL company unless in exceptional circumstances. In the event that a vehicle has to be hired from a company that is not on the WDSL approved list, the hire contract must be in writing with a reputable operator. The WDSL requires that the appropriate insurance applies and that the driver is competent to drive the particular vehicle and holds the correct driving licence.
- § Adults who drive young players in their own car must ensure that their passenger's safety is not at risk by ensuring that the vehicle is roadworthy, and that they hold the appropriate licence and insurance cover for carrying young players.

Insurance for the Event

The League shall ensure that it has adequate insurance cover for all Staff and Players. Parents / Guardians should be made aware of the need for comprehensive insurance to cover their child, e.g. health / medical insurance etc. If the Event is to include any potentially hazardous activities, once having taken into account the Risk Assessment guidelines, e.g. other sports or adventure experiences, particular care should be taken to ensure that Players and Staff are covered appropriately. Additional insurance may be necessary for Staff or Players with known medical conditions. The Head of Delegation / Event Administrator should check this out, long before departure date.

Accommodation

- § At all times the Head of Delegation must be satisfied that buildings meet health and safety required standards.
- § Young player's accommodation must be close to rooms occupied by Staff. Consideration should be given when groups comprise both male and females by allocating the same gender rooms within the same area. Where possible similar age groups should be kept together. On arrival, players should be shown the accommodation plan and be made aware of Staff rooms and fire exits. A fire drill should be carried out as soon as possible.
- § At no time can a member of Staff share a room with any young person.
- § Staff must not use changing, shower or cloakroom facilities at the same time as young players, except in the most exceptional circumstances.
- § Where groups are of mixed gender, there must be separate male and female sleeping and bathroom facilities for both young people and adults.

Communication with Parents / Carers

The Event Administrator is responsible for ensuring that Parents and young players complete and return all Consent Forms.

Parents should be informed that when a young player still attending school is selected, permission should be sought from the Principal to release the young player from school during term time.

Prior to any Event, parents will be informed if a player is selected. The Event Leader / Administrator must give parents / carers written details of the Event including:

- § Dates of the Event
- § Times of departure and return
- § Clearly specified pick up and set down points for players and the beginning and end of any Event
- § Names of the Head of Delegation and accompanying Staff
- § Details of soccer and non soccer activities (adventure and potentially hazardous activities at the Event must be emphasised)
- § Addresses and telephone numbers of the accommodation being used
- § Telephone numbers of the WDSL and the Event Administrator and contact numbers for the group
- § Insurances
- § Standards of behaviour and dress
- § Clothing and playing equipment required
- § What expenses are covered

Communication with Clubs

When a player is under the age of 18 and not attending school, permission will be sought from the club as well as from parents / carers. When a player selected is still attending school, Clubs will be advised that permission has been sought from the parent / carer and the player's school. Dates of the Event will also be supplied.

Communication with Young Players

The Head of Delegation must tell young players:

- § The standard of behaviour and dress expected of them, both on and off the football pitch
- § The safety precautions, including supervision arrangements, to be taken
- § To wear seat belts (when provided) when travelling in cars, minibuses or coaches
- § Which expenses will be their own responsibility and which will be met by the WDSL.
- § To carry the Group mobile telephone number, identity cards and address and telephone number of their accommodation with them at all times
- § The name of the Designated Person for Child Protection at the Event
- § That they can approach any member of Staff if they have concerns or worries while at the Event.

Documentation at the Event

The Head of Delegation or nominated member of Staff must carry the following documentation:

- § A list of all group members, both Staff and Players
- § Staff Personal Contact Forms
- § Parental and Player Consent Forms / Contact Numbers
- § Name, address and telephone number of the groups accommodation
- § Emergency Procedures Guidance
- § The Medical Staff must carry all relevant Medical Consent Forms

Documentation at the League

WDSL must keep:

- § The itinerary
- § Names, addresses and telephone numbers of parents/carers
- § Contact addresses and telephone numbers for Staff
- § A copy of the Emergency Procedures Card carried by the Event Leader
- § Copies of all documentation carried by the Event Leader
- § Copies of all Consent Forms for Parents, Players and Staff
- § Copies of all Medical Information

Emergency and Accident Procedures

The Head of Delegation must make themselves familiar with the Emergency and Accident Procedures listed in the Emergency Procedure Guidance and carry it with them at all times. The Head of Delegation must ensure appropriate staff carry the Emergency Procedure Guidance at all times at the Event.

Overseas Events - Additional Requirements

Form E111 is the certificate of entitlement to free or reduced cost emergency medical treatment for EU nationals in most European countries. Ensure appropriate insurance cover.

Passports, Visas and Vaccinations

- § The Event Administrator must check the validity of passports of all members of the Event.
- § If any player is subject to a care or court order, the appropriate Authority must be consulted well in advance and the necessary consent obtained for travel.
- § In the case of an Event to a country or countries, which require a visa, the Event Administrator must ensure that all Players and Staff are in possession of a valid visa for the country or countries.
- § In the case of an Event to a country or countries that require vaccinations, the Event Administrator must ensure that all Players and Staff have had the necessary vaccinations.

Money and Valuables

The Head of Delegation must tell Players how to carry money and valuables discreetly. The group's money including Player's own pocket money should be held at a secure central location and distributed on a regular basis by a designated member of Staff.

Documentation

In addition to the documentation carried at Events in the Irish Republic, the Head of Delegation must ensure the appropriate staff carry:

- § Travel tickets
- § Passports, visas and vaccination certificates
- § Insurance arrangements and contact telephone numbers
- § Address and phone number of the Irish Embassy or Consulate
- § Location of hospital(s) and medical services and how to contact them
- § A separate list of the numbers of any documents and passports
- § The Event Administrator must be provided with appropriate matching documentation.

Mobile Phones

The mobile phone carried with the group must be capable of use in the country or countries concerned.

Contingency Funds

Contingency funds (or access to them) must be taken.