**Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners**

**(CPSU document)**

**Why is information sharing guidance important? Because child protection and safeguarding involves sensitive information that directly affects the welfare of children and young people.**

To keep these children safe, information needs to be shared appropriately so that decisions can be made to protect them.

However, clear boundaries around information sharing are important to maintain confidentiality where appropriate and to ensure that only those who need the information are made aware of it.

**What information to share**

Whenever a sports organisation receives information that raises concerns about a child or children, decisions need to be made about information sharing.  This could include:

* concerns about a child received within or outside the sport
* concerns about a person in a position of trust, such as a coach – this could include information on a [**Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check**](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service)
* concerns about a member of a sports club
* concerns about a sports environment, such as an event location or hosting arrangements

**Key principles for deciding what to share**

The Government guidance, [**Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice)**,** describes the ‘7 Golden Rules’ of information sharing:

1. **Remember that the Data Protection Act 2018 and human rights law are not barriers**to justified information sharing, but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.
2. **Be open and honest with the individual** (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
3. **Seek advice from other practitioners** if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.
4. **Share with informed consent where appropriate** and, where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. You may still share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is good reason to do so, such as where safety may be at risk.
5. **Consider safety and well-being**: Base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.
6. **Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure**: Ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely.
7. **Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it** – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

**Who to share information with**

Part of the decision-making process will include consideration about who to share information with. This could include:

* **Statutory organisations** – the Police and/or Children’s Services must be informed about child protection concerns; Designated Officers should be consulted where there are concerns about someone in a position of trust.
* **Disclosure & Barring Service** – must be informed of any concerns about someone in regulated activity who is suspended or expelled from the organisation.
* **Other clubs and other sports organisations** – informing other organisations need to be considered according to the principles below in order that they can safeguard children in their care who may be at risk of harm.
* **Individuals within the organisation** – this will be decided on the basis of who needs to know what information in order to keep children safe according to the principles below.