

How does having a child safeguarding policy enhance corporate governance at HKSI

Dr Trisha Leahy

## Overview

Governance

Safeguarding

Risk Management

HSKI Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy

# Corporate Governance



# Corporate Governance

The System by which companies and organisations are controlled  
(Hong Kong Institute of Directors (HKIoD))

In the commercial sector, the basic purpose of all companies is to preserve and enhance the investments which created them and to increase return on investment for the long term for many generations

**Applying to our sport organisations, our purpose is to preserve our sport and to increase participation and talent development for many generations**

# HK Institute of Directors (HKIoD)

Good corporate governance can make a great contribution to success,

And bad governance makes failure more likely.

It is therefore in the interests of all organisations to consider whether they can improve their system of governance.

**Good Governance is a reflection of good leadership**

# Principles of Good Governance (HKIoD)

There is no one right way in which organisations should be governed but there are fundamental principles which will assist all organisations to succeed, including:

- Comply with the **Law** (vicarious liability for harm done by staff /volunteers)
- Identify and **manage risks**
- Adopt and develop systems which enhance the **quality of decision** making.
- Earn the **respect** of stakeholders
- Establish and maintain good **reputation**

# IOC

Good governance is part of the Fundamental Principles of Olympism. It serves to get the **respect and confidence of all partners.**

The Basic Universal Principles of Good Governance of the Olympics and Sports Movement include:

**transparency, responsibility** and **accountability**

# Why is Safeguarding a Governance Issue in Sport

- **Child Abuse Occurs in Society** - it is a social problem,
- **Sports is part of society** so we have to ensure our sports environment is protected and safe for children
- **Safeguarding is part of our risk management ,responsibility, accountability and legal compliance and reputation management ( ie Governance)**

## Evidence that the risk exists

### International research and policy initiatives on safeguarding in sport

- (90's)
  - Brackenridge - UK
  - Kirby, -Canada
  
- (early 2000's)
  - Leahy – Australia
  - Fasting – Norway, Eurpoe, Africa,
  - Togfegaard – Denmark
  - Gervis; Stafford – UK
  - Sterling - Canada

- (late 2000's)

#### International Agencies

- **IOC Medical Commission**  
(Mountjoy, et al 2016. BJSM, 50 1019-1029)
- **UNICEF**  
(Brackenridge, Fasting, Kirby, Leahy, 2010)
- **Safe Sport International (SSI)**



## Child Abuse in Sport

Non-accidental harm Moderate - severe	TOTAL % N = 4043	ETHNIC MINORITY % N=334	LGB % N=308	ELITE % N = 112	ATHLETES w DISABILITY % N=183
Psychological	26.1	24.8	34.6*	42.0*	41.6*
Physical	10.2	16.4*	18.2*	23.2*	30.3*
Sexual	12.8	17.6*	24.4*	25.9*	31.4*

Source: Vertommen T, et al., 2016, *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 51 223-236

# Safeguarding and Governance At HKSI



# HKSI: Safeguarding reflects **Integrity** and is part of Good Governance

e.g.,

Child safeguarding is designated as a top **priority of integrity** for the European Commission on Expert Group on Good Governance in Sport

**Integrity** is a major theme of the Tokyo Olympic Agenda.

- The IOC reminds us that we must have Safeguarding policies to:
  - Safeguard athletes
  - Protect the integrity of sports and sports organisations
  - Protect those working in sport
  - Promote the values of safe sport

# HKSI: Safeguarding is Organisational **risk management**

- Risk identification and risk management are key components of Good governance
  - **Written policies for managing the most serious of the risks** are likely to help avoid disaster.
- Safeguarding athletes in sport means having **written policy and procedures that reduce the risk** of social problems such as child abuse getting into our sports environment
  - **Identify** the risk
  - **Reduce** the risk

# Risk ID

Wrong type of staff/volunteer .....

Staff/volunteer do not know what behavior is child abuse .....

Staff/Volunteers do not know what to do if they see something wrong .....

Staff/Volunteers do not understand the policy and procedures .....

# Risk Management

Recruitment system (Screening Questions/Criminal background Check)

Code of Conduct

Safeguarding Policy and procedures

Regular education and staff training



# HKSI Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy

- Top Down and Bottom up Approach
- Developed the policy in consultation with staff and with the Board/Executive Committee
- consulted and refined many times
- Final Approval by the Board
- Published on the HKSI Intranet with FAQ's
- Regular education/ Staff training

# Two Issues we found

**1.** Everyone agrees Child Abuse is not OK

But

sometimes we are unaware of **high risk behaviors** which may be misinterpreted or misunderstood ( so we made a list of behaviors which may be high risk , but **not necessarily “wrong”** and we made a list of FAQ).

**2.** Everyone is worried about what to do if they come across is a suspected case (so we made the **reporting line very simple**)

# HKSI Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy

- **Format - simple**

1. **Policy statement** - indicating HKSI's Commitment to safety and welfare of athletes and education and empowerment of staff.

2. **Clear Definitions** of physical, sexual, psychological (emotional) abuse and neglect

3. **Clear Procedures** if there is a case.

# Staff Role

- It is not the responsibility of staff to either investigate or decide whether or not child abuse has taken place.
- However we each have a responsibility to report.
- If staff are not sure what to do they can call ACA or SWD or Plan International
- So individual staff/volunteers only need to remember one thing - report to the right authority (HKSI CE) and your job is done.

## If there is a report about a staff member....

Three areas to manage , and clear procedures will make it less difficult:

**Child welfare** (Parents/relevant experts in the community)

**Staff management** (this will relate to your other policies eg HR- staff discipline)

**Organisation Issues** (Legal liability; Insurance; Internal and external communication, Media, etc)

# Conclusion

- Good Governance requires us to act in the best interests of the sports organisation
- Without athletes, there is no sports organisation, - no sports!
- Best practice Governance requires us to have a no compromise approach to athlete safety.
- But we are sport experts , not Safeguarding experts
- So.....

- **Use expert help**
- Work with the experts to develop your policy
- **Communication**
- Communicate *many, many, many* times with athletes and staff/volunteers
- Develop FAQ
- Put Policy on the organisation Intranet
- **Regular Review**
- Use the experts
- **Staff Training/ Athletes Training**
- Use the experts

# Resources



# Olympic Agenda 2020 : Sport Integrity

- The IOC is committed to strengthening the integrity of sports organisations and protecting clean athletes. The fight against **doping** and any other forms of **cheating** in sport on the one hand, and the strengthening of **ethics** with improvements in **transparency**, good **governance** and **accountability of sports organisations** on the other, have been top priorities for the IOC.
- Integrity entails credibility, and the credibility of competitions and sports organisations is one of the three pillars of [Olympic Agenda 2020](#). If the credibility of sports competitions suffers, then sooner or later the credibility of sports organisations will suffer. The same is true the other way around.

# Toolkits

- [https://www.iwf.net/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2018/10/IOC Safeguarding Toolkit EN G.pdf](https://www.iwf.net/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2018/10/IOC_Safeguarding_Toolkit_EN_G.pdf)
- <https://www.sportanddev.org/en/toolkit/child-protection-and-safeguarding/international-safeguards-children-sport>

Thank You!