

Guidance on Welcoming and Safeguarding children with a disability

NISA are committed to ensuring ice skating is open, and accessible, to all members of the community and they are supported to achieve their potential in any capacity whether as a skater, employee, volunteer, coach or official. This principle applies regardless of, age, race, disability, ability, gender, religion or belief, sexual orientation or background.

We aim to welcome as many people as possible into the sport - regardless of background - and ensures opportunities within the sport are open and accessible to all. Many children with disabilities or special needs can be welcomed into the sport with a sensible approach that involves talking with the child and his or her parents about what their abilities are and what they may need some assistance or different arrangement with.

Children with disabilities are children first and need to enjoy opportunities and experiences open to all children in a safe environment.

NISA is committed to supporting disabled children to be fully involved in ice skating through the provision of a range of activities, training and supportive good practice guidance.

To help achieve this in ice skating we are committed to supporting ice club personnel including coaches, officials and other volunteers to ensure they are inclusive of, and safeguard, children with disabilities.

NISA is aware the most valuable resource within clubs are the staff and volunteers who appreciate the value of ice skating for disabled children and are supported to develop the confidence, will, and desire, to ensure they can become fully integrated members of the ice skating family.

In the first instance, the club should discuss the child's needs and abilities with the child and his or her parents/carers. For many children with a disability, parents and carers will be able to offer practical advice on adaptations or arrangements that can be made to enable their child to participate.

It is good practice to agree a support plan with the parents and the child, and to review this regularly. The club welfare officer should be involved in this process. It may be necessary or useful to involve the child and the parent /carer in the plan itself, if this will help meet the child's needs and allow them to participate.

Remember, many children may have hidden disabilities (or special needs) – such as an autistic spectrum disorder, or deafness, or another condition that is not obvious. It is important during the registration process and/ or welcome meeting to offer the opportunity for parents to meet someone in private to discuss their child, if they would like to do so. This forms part of our 'Welcoming' approach for all children, including those with disabilities.

Children with disabilities have particular vulnerability to abuse and neglect – club personnel should be aware of these, see

<https://thecpsu.org.uk/help-advice/topics/deaf-and-disabled/>

