

MSSP Spectator Policy at Events Held During the School Day, KS 1 and 2

(Effective from 08.10.25)

Our aim is for every child and young leader to have a safe, positive experience of PE, sport, and physical activity at MSSP events, free from abuse, bullying, discrimination, and avoidable harm.

While we have long promoted positive spectating through our RESPECT programme, recent feedback from our Pupil Voice Survey alongside incidents at some of our events highlighted the potential risks linked to adult behaviour. To prioritise physical and emotional safety, after consultation with our network and Steering Committee, MSSP introduced this policy, prohibiting spectators at all school-day events in public or open/accessible spaces.

This decision was not taken lightly. We understand how fulfilling it can be for parents to watch their children participate in sport and in-turn, how much children can value their parents' support and interest in their development. However, during school-day events, the duty of care for the students lies with the schools. With the resources available to MSSP and our Primary/Special Schools, we reviewed and amended our procedures to ensure any potential risk to the welfare of students is minimised.

By adopting this approach, we will ensure:

- **A Positive, Inclusive Environment**

Teachers understand the varying levels of ability and experience among participants and can maintain a safe space for learning and making mistakes without external pressure or negative behaviours from spectators. Our events calendar aims to be inclusive and provides a range of competitions and festivals suited to all different abilities - this is clearly communicated to our PE Coordinators when they register for the events.

Additionally, all venues and events undergo detailed safeguarding risk assessments. These include photographs of the facility and details of the activities to be delivered and in turn provide a platform for the schools to create their own Educational Visit Risk Assessments and to prepare children for this new experience.

- **Effective Resource Management**

With a small team delivering around 2-3 events per week across the whole borough, MSSP staff and school teachers do not have the time or resources to manage spectator interactions or provide sporting entertainment spaces for adults. This can take away the focus and personnel for providing the best experience possible for the children.

- **Reduced Risk of Inappropriate Behaviour**

We eliminate risks such as spectators taking photos of children without consent, entering the field of play, overcoaching or showing aggression toward young officials or participants.

- **School Zones and Clear Identification of Vetted Adults**

Within a public space, staff can easily identify all vetted personnel through safeguarding measures (all vetted staff wear MSSP's high-vis REFSPECT sashes), ensuring any unknown adults entering the school zones are quickly addressed.

- **Clear Code of Conduct and Staff Training**

All adults in attendance are asked to read, sign and adhere to our code of conduct, removing any confusion or grey areas around acceptable behaviour. Training is delivered by MSSP to all PE Coordinators around our REFSPECT programme and Safeguarding protocols annually (as a minimum).

- **Feedback from All**

At our events we use surveys to take on board open and honest feedback from the children and staff that attend. We review this and adapt our provision to best meet the needs of the children and to provide an inclusive and enjoyable experience for all. We also survey the Sports Leaders to understand how it felt to be an official or helper at the event.

- **Values Upheld and Promoted**

Schools and sports leaders are also encouraged to nominate other schools (or individual children) that displayed our REFSPECT values at the events. This fosters a culture where positive behaviours and kindness are highly valued and promoted alongside the opportunity to perform and compete.

Protocols at MSSP Events

Our events are held at a range of public, private and school facilities/venues. It's therefore not always possible to physically isolate the playing area from the public and MSSP do not have the personnel or resources to provide security to remove the public from the playing area. As such we propose the following solutions which all attending schools will be asked to uphold and support, as they would on their own school sites. Schools should consider these protocols (as well as the MSSP Event Risk Assessment) when completing their own Educational Visit Risk Assessment.

Accompanying Adults

In all cases the schools will be able to nominate staff and vetted volunteers to accompany and manage their students taking part in our events. We would anticipate that a maximum of two staff per school team (KS2) be ample, unless some children require one-to-one or additional support.

These accompanying adults must abide by (and sign) the MSSP Accompanying Adults Code of Conduct on arrival at the event and follow KCSIE Safeguarding guidance at all times. In addition they must not take, or upload online, images of any children from other schools without the teacher's permission and knowledge. If accompanying adults do not conform to these expectations they will be asked to leave the facility immediately and will not be permitted to support as an accompanying adult at any future events.

All accompanying adults must wear an MSSP yellow sash at all times.

Protocols at Different Venues

At school sites that are gated and have a manned reception:

- No spectators will be permitted to enter the school site (this has always been the policy for school sites).
- Accompanying adults will need to bring photo ID to all sites and may also need details of their Enhanced DBS check.

At gated, lockable playing fields (often a school's sport site) that do not have a manned reception:

- No spectators or public will be allowed on site.
- Gates will be kept locked with a combination code padlock.
- MSSP cannot man the gate once registration is completed. School staff will be responsible for locking the gate behind them if they need to leave or enter during the event for example to take their children to the toilet.
- The code will be given to staff on arrival.

At public sites such as open parks, without a lockable, physical boundary:

- Spectators must not be invited.
- If spectators/members of the public are at the venue, the MSSP team will ask them to keep far away from the playing area and will use yellow boundary tape to support this.
- Posters will be placed in the facility asking the public/spectators not to take or post online any photographs or videos.
- If adults encroach the playing area or interact with children they must be asked to leave immediately by any MSSP team or school staff member wearing a yellow sash.
- Any school staff member wearing a yellow sash should feel confident to inform the adult that they are not permitted on the playing area (in the same way that they would be expected to challenge a non-identified adult within their own school).
- If the non-identified adult/spectator/member of the public refuses to comply, all activity will be paused by MSSP until they leave. If necessary the police will be called.
- If the spectator is related to a specific school, MSSP will ask the lead teacher from that school to support in any dealings with the spectator.

At private sports clubs or public leisure facility sites:

- Where it is possible to physically isolate and gate the playing area this will be the preference and a combination padlock will be used.
- Where there is no way to provide a physical, lockable barrier, the same approach as with public park sites will be followed.

Exceptions

There may on occasion, be events where the parents/carers are specifically invited to attend and spectate. This will be on a case by case basis and parents should not be invited unless MSSP have specifically contacted schools to explain the process for this.

First Aid

May we also remind schools that it is their responsibility to provide adequate first aid for their own students. This includes travelling to and from and whilst at the event. MSSP do not have the resources to provide first aid at events.

Parent Communications

All of the event website information will highlight that Spectators are not permitted. Many of the events already stated 'no spectators' due to being on a school site. Schools should ensure parents are not invited or encouraged to attend any school-day events.

Impact

This measure is about maximising safety and creating the best possible conditions for young people to thrive. By fostering calm, inclusive, and professionally managed sporting environments, we prioritise children's physical and emotional development, confidence, and long-term love of sport.

It is vital that all of us remain vigilant and work together to follow these protocols at every event. This policy has been agreed by the MSSP Steering Committee.

If you have any queries or concerns please do get in touch. We want this approach to work well for the young people and be helpful for all our schools.