



Open Access Policy

“Open access play provision may be permanent or a short-term scheme offering play and opportunities. Open access provision is where children may come and go freely; this is where there is no requirement for children to be either brought to or collected from the provision by an adult”

‘Fair Play for Children’

Sporting Communities offers open access play and sports provision across many locations, we do not offer childcare during open access provision. This means that children can decide to come and go as they please, regardless of whether they are accompanied by an adult.

Open access play and sports sessions are designed specifically to respond to the needs and wishes of children young people, which makes them very popular “out of school provisions”. Sporting Communities provide fully DBS checked and trained staff at all sessions, it is not staff’s responsibility to ensure young people stay on site during sessions.

All of our provision is open access, unless otherwise stipulated. Sporting Communities state our operation of open access sessions on the Registration and Consent Form and parent/carers can understand more about our open access sessions and the nature of them via this Open Access Policy, which is available on our website. Parent/carers should sign the Registration and Consent Form to state that they understand this policy and that they are happy for their children to engage with the guidelines outlined below.

As many children and young people who attend Sporting Communities sessions initially do so without consultation from their parents/carers, once the child/young person has been issued a Registration and Consent Form, failing to sign and return the Registration and Consent Form will be seen as agreement of consent. Any child under the age of 8 attending an open access session must be accompanied by a responsible adult.

For targeted provision or childcare, NO child/young person will be admitted to any session without a completed, signed consent form. For children under 8 accessing targeted/childcare indoor sessions we will phone parents if the child asks to leave the sessions and parents/carers need to be available to pick children up if needed. On targeted/childcare park session parents of children under 8 will be expected to stay until a parent/carer comes to collect their child(ren). Targeted or childcare provision will be stipulated and agreed with parents/carers prior to the session commencement.

Any children/young people formally referred by an agency should complete Sporting Communities’ Referral Form and ensure that the child/young person has completed a Registration and Consent Form before engaging in any open access, targeted or childcare sessions.

Benefits of open access play provision:

Open access play provision is a very special and unique opportunity for children and young people. There currently are few opportunities for children



and young people to engage in activities that they have freely chosen. Sporting Communities is staffed by staff who DBS checked staff who are fully trained to allow children to play and engage with their environment on their own terms. Playing at the open access session benefits children and young people by:

- Providing them with opportunity to enjoy freedom, exercise choice and control over their own actions.
- Offering the opportunity to test boundaries and explore risk.
- Offering a far wider range of physical, social and intellectual experiences than any other single activity.
- Being available at times to suit them.
- Providing the opportunity to mix with children of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.
- Children/young people can come and go from the session as they wish, giving them the ability to end their play when they choose.
- Contributing to the recommended minimum 60 minutes of physical activity all children/young people need daily.
- Providing the opportunity to gain confidence and independence in their personal, social and emotional development, their language development, their creative and physical development as well as extending their knowledge and understanding of the world around them.

Please note that if the weather, facility, health and safety, safeguarding or other issues cause the workers to feel that the session can no longer continue, they are within their rights to stop delivery and remove themselves from the locality.