

FACTSHEET: Children and Licensed Premises

Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership (SCSP) expects that where children are present at licensed premises, a suitable, family friendly environment will be provided. To achieve this, the SCSP must consider whether there is risk to children including moral, psychological or physical harm and take steps to ensure that risk is appropriately managed. This may involve giving safeguarding advice or training to operators or applying for licence conditions, to influence and regulate the way the premises operate.

What is a licensed premises?

A licensed premise is a designated area in which regulated activities take place, for example where alcohol is on sale, there is provision of entertainment or other 'licensable activities'.

There is a broad range of licensed premises including: shops, pubs, clubs, sports venues, theatres, events, parks, restaurants, hotels, cinemas and gambling premises. Some schools and religious establishments are licensed for example during community events.

Who is responsible for safeguarding children at licensed premises?

Under the Licensing Act 2003 and Gambling Act 2005, the SCSP is the designated Responsible Authority for the protection of children from harm and as such, has a statutory duty to ensure premises operate effective safeguarding policies.

Under licensing legislation, the premises management has a legal responsibility to protect children and young people and must be able to demonstrate 'due diligence' in safeguarding.

Parents/carers and other responsible adults such as those working with children, who take children to licensed premises, also have a responsibility for supervising their children while there, unless alternative and appropriate arrangements are in place such as a crèche.

For further details see **chapter 3.1.2** in Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership Procedures.

Which children does the licensing legislation apply to?

The SCSP aims to protect all children at licensed premises, including if they are:

- Customers
- Students
- Working (paid or unpaid) at the premises
- Involved in the provision of performance/entertainment
- Visiting or living at licensed premises.

What are the risks and what action should be taken if there are concerns?

The risks to all children at licensed premises will vary, depending on the type of premises and activities taking place. Risks may include:

- Children witnessing dangerous or inappropriate adult behaviour
- Exposure to substance misuse/drug related paraphernalia
- Criminality
- Lack of adult supervision
- Underage drinking
- Underage gambling
- Child exploitation

The SCSP works in partnership with the licensed trade when possible, to support operators to resolve issues. When this approach is not appropriate, the SCSP may take other steps such as setting an action plan with the premises management and other agencies or by using licensing legislation to address concerns; this may be an application to review a premises licence, which can result in the licence conditions being modified to restrict children's access, a change to the premises management, or the licence being suspended or revoked.