



## **SAFEGUARDING & PROTECTION POLICY**

### **Version 4 January 2025**

Bedfordshire County Netball Association (BCNA) is committed to working with our leagues to create and maintain a safe and positive environment for all young people to play netball. It is vital that it is recognised that some children and young people may be more vulnerable than others of a similar age and some regrettably may encounter barriers to due many factors such as age, disability, sexual orientation, religion etc., Everyone has a responsibility as the safety of young people is paramount.

#### **PRINCIPALS**

The County when making provision for children and young people must ensure that:

- Anyone under the age of 18 will be considered a child or young person regarding safeguarding
- The rights, dignity and worth of all young people should always be respected
- The welfare of a child is our top priority
- All young people whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs, sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse
- Any suspicions, complaints, allegations of abuse or poor practice/breach of EN Code of Conduct will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately by the clubs safeguarding officer.
- All officials and volunteers involved in sport have a responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate officer. Volunteers are not trained to deal with situations of abuse or to decide if abuse has occurred, however, they should be aware of their responsibility to report concerns if they arise

#### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Each league will have an appointed Safeguarding Officer(s) in line with England Netball Recruitment Guideline and Volunteer Role Description to manage safeguarding and child protection.
2. Adopt and implement the England Netball Safeguarding and Protecting Young People in netball policy and procedures and guidelines
3. Support and continue to support their members through education and training in relation to Safeguarding and Protecting Young people
4. Ensure there is continued education in line with EN guidelines which includes the completion of an enhanced DBS with EN for all adults who are in contact with children under the age of 18.
5. It is the responsibility of the safeguarding officer to determine whether or not abuse has taken place but it is everyone's responsibility in netball to act appropriately and report concerns. Any cases of suspected abuse should be reported to the county safeguarding officer.

6. Working in partnership with parents, carers and the young people themselves is essential for safeguarding and protection of young people.

## **GOOD PRACTICE & GUIDELINES**

Many sports require a degree of physical contact between Coaches, Volunteers and children or young people.

- Coaches should not put themselves in a situation where they are alone with a child when other coaches or adults are not present
- Volunteers should never be left alone with a child when other adults are not present.
- Coaches and volunteers should be aware of their responsibilities regarding the welfare of children and the need to protect themselves from allegations of abuse or poor practice.
- Invite or allow young people to stay with them at their home
- Transport young people in your car alone without their parents/guardian's permission.
- Use or allow young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Make sexual suggestive comments to a young person, even in fun
- Do things of a personal nature they can do for themselves, unless you have been requested to do so by a parent or guardian. It is recognised that some young people will always need help e.g. shoelace tying. This does not preclude anyone attending to an injured/ill young person or rendering first aid. Although, any treatment should be recorded in the clubs accident log.

## **DISCIPLINE**

When verbal discipline is used it will be with the clear intention of teaching or reinforcing appropriate behaviour. It must not be used impulsively, to gain power, or to embarrass or humiliate a child/young person. Discipline should be used only to:

- Develop a sense of responsibility for behaviour
- Develop respect for others and their property
- Reinforce the rules or values of the sport
- Reinforce positive behaviour or attitudes
- Reinforce awareness of health and safety aspects of the activity
- To keep all athletes safe

## **COLLECTION OF CHILDREN**

The County cannot take responsibility for the collection of children after an event, this responsibility rests with Coaches/buddies/parents/guardians. However, at any County organised event no child will be left unattended until collected by a parent/guardian.

## **COACH/VOLUNTEER RATIOS**

Coach/volunteer participant ratios are based on the age of the children involved; the degree of risk the activity involves, and whether there are any disability needs. The lower the age of the participants, the greater the need for supervision. All activities follow the guidelines provided by England Netball, which state that the recommended ratio is 1 adult to 10 children. Organisers of events should refer to England Netball guidelines when arranging County events.

## CHANGING ROOMS

- When children and young people use changing rooms, they should be supervised by a minimum two adults.
- Adults should not change or shower at the same time using the same facilities as children and young people.
- For mixed gender activities, separate facilities must be made available for boys and girls.
- If a child feels uncomfortable changing or showering in public, no pressure should be placed on them to do so. Instead, they should be encouraged to use facilities that can provide greater privacy, for example a locked toilet or encouraged to shower or change at home
- If children with disabilities require use of changing facilities, the County will ensure that they and their carers are involved in deciding what assistance if any is required.

## ADDITIONAL CHILD PROTECTION CONTACTS

If you would like more information about Child Protection issues/training courses please see contacts below:

- EN Safeguarding Enquiries : Email [safeguarding@englandnetball.co.uk](mailto:safeguarding@englandnetball.co.uk) or [besafe@englandnetball.co.uk](mailto:besafe@englandnetball.co.uk)
- Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU): [www.thecpsu.org.uk](http://www.thecpsu.org.uk) 0116 234 7278/7280
- NSPCC: [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)
- Help for children and young people - ChildLine 0800 1111 Help for adults - Help and Advice - 0808 800 5000

**This document will be reviewed annually**

**Next review date: January 2026**