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01 INTRODUCTION

Everyone in netball has a responsibility to create a safe and enjoyable netball experience for all. England Netball acknowledges we all have a duty of care to safeguard the physical, emotional, and psychological health of our players. This includes Leagues.

England Netball guidance and policy predominantly focus on netball Clubs. This has left Leagues to operate without guidance and has led to varying requirements being put on clubs.

All England Netball affiliated clubs should adopt EN's safeguarding standards and policies, but Leagues also play a part in making sure these are upheld.

This document provides standardised guidance specifically for Leagues.

02 LINKED GUIDANCE AND POLICIES

- Safeguarding Children and Young People in Netball policy
- Safeguarding Adults in Netball Policy
- Safeguarding Disciplinary Regulations
- England Netball Codes of Conduct

[Safeguarding Policies and Documents - EN knowledge Centre - England Netball Knowledge Centre](#)

03 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LEAGUES

Leagues operate on the basis that the primary responsibility for player welfare during matches rests with netball clubs, their coach, their Club Safeguarding Officer (CSO) and any other club volunteers. However, like all netball organisations, Leagues have a safeguarding responsibility.

For Leagues

- Every League should nominate a safeguarding officer (League SO). This applies to adult, junior and mixed competitions.
- The League SO need not be DBS checked (unless they have regular – 4 or more times per month - unsupervised contact with under 18s because of this role)
- The League SO should have at least a basic understanding of safeguarding in sport, but is NOT expected to do the mandatory training courses that CSOs and coaches are expected to do. We recommend this FREE online course [High Speed Training - Safeguarding in Sport](#). EN recognise that Club Safeguarding Officers have a greater need to complete the mandatory DBS and safeguarding courses.
- The League Committee should play their part in ensuring minimum safeguarding requirements are upheld. We recommend that, throughout the season, the League SO should occasionally seek proof of compliance from clubs in their League (refer to safeguarding requirements at Section 4 above). This might include asking to see DBS or safeguarding training certificates and checking they are within the last 3 years. Failure to comply with any of the rules above should be managed by the League committee through the usual League processes as appropriate (e.g. points deducted, matches forfeited or short-term bans from the League).
- Leagues should ensure that the **Responsible Adult** is in place as per the guidance below.
- League Safeguarding officers are supported by county safeguarding volunteers and the England Netball safeguarding team (besafe@englandnetball.co.uk) including drop-in sessions. More info here: [Safeguarding - The Huddle - England Netball Knowledge Centre](#)

For teams

- Every League should adopt England Netball Safeguarding Policies
- Every team with a player under the age of 18 (even one) should assign a **Responsible Adult** for each match/competition **before** the event begins.
- The **Responsible Adult** is there to promote and support the young player(s) welfare and safety and ensure any injury, medical or safeguarding issues are dealt with appropriately.
- Leagues should understand that many clubs do not have enough coaches or CSOs to send one to every match.
- The **Responsible Adult** can be a CSO, coach, their parent or any other person with the child(ren)'s parent/carer's knowledge and consent. They should be connected to the club in some way to ensure they have some knowledge of the child(ren) they are responsible for.
- The **Responsible Adult** should be made aware of any medical, medication, disabilities or family safeguarding issues for each player.
- The **Responsible Adult** SHOULD NOT be an on-court player. This is because if the child or playing adult becomes ill or injured, they would not be in a position to be the Responsible Adult.
- The **Responsible Adult** can be responsible for more than one child.
- The **Responsible Adult** is only eligible for a DBS check if they have regular (4 or more times per month) unsupervised contact with a child or children (that is not their own child).

- The **Responsible Adult** is NOT expected to do the mandatory safeguarding training, but we recommend they do have a basic level of safeguarding awareness. We recommend this FREE online course [High Speed Training - Safeguarding in Sport](#).
- Teams/clubs can assign a different **Responsible Adult** for every match if they wish.
- **NB** – some venues (particularly schools) insist that at least one adult with a valid DBS is present during any event at their venue, so event organisers may have to consider this when thinking about who is present.

If safeguarding concerns arise...

- As usual, if safeguarding issues arise the welfare of the affected person should be prioritised on the day.
- Safeguarding incidents should be reported to England Netball safeguarding team via the online form or via besafe@englandnetball.co.uk.
- Urgent or criminal matters should be reported to the police or social services.
- Parents or carers should normally be notified of safeguarding concerns unless to do so would put a child or other vulnerable person at serious risk.

04 CLUB SAFEGUARDING REQUIREMENTS

These are as follows (more info here: [I'm involved in running a Club - EN knowledge Centre](#)):

- Every club (regardless of whether it has junior members or not) must have a named safeguarding officer (CSO - ideally not a coach or the chair).
- Every club must have a safeguarding policy.
- Clubs should ensure that members know how to contact the CSO.
- Coaches (L2 and Bee Leaders) with unsupervised contact with children must have an enhanced DBS check via England Netball (to be repeated every 3 years). Application instructions here: [Attachments - DBS Information - EN knowledge Centre](#).
- CSOs in clubs with members under the age of 18 must have an enhanced DBS check via England Netball (to be repeated every 3 years).
- Mandatory safeguarding training should be completed by the relevant people - more detail here: [Attachments - Training and Education - EN knowledge Centre](#).
- CSOs must keep a record of DBS and safeguarding training including 3-year renewal dates.

People who do not have regular (4 or more times per month) unsupervised contact with children are not entitled to enhanced DBS checks. Checks need to be via EN because this is the only way EN can see the result – this is in line with national DBS and all other sport governing bodies' rules. EN make no money from volunteer DBS checks.

Safeguarding training is mandated even for teachers, and other professions with a good degree of safeguarding knowledge, because the training is specific to the sporting context, unlike training in education or other settings.

CSOs are required for EVERY club (even adults only) because adults can have safeguarding challenges at any point in their lives (mental ill-health, domestic violence, or hidden disabilities or neurodiversity). Also, coaches are in a position of power over players and can abuse that position causing a safeguarding issue for adult players too.

05 MORE INFORMATION

- England Netball safeguarding pages: [Safeguarding | England Netball](#)
- Online concern report form: [I want to report a Safeguarding Concern - EN knowledge Centre](#)
- Safeguarding for netball clubs: [I'm involved in running a Club - EN knowledge Centre](#)
- Sources of external support: [Useful Websites for External Support and Advice - EN knowledge Centre](#)