



Netball Northern Ireland is committed to confidentiality and how this is to be respected. We insist that families and children in contact with our organisation are sure, for example, that personal and sensitive details which they have confided about their lives or family situations will not be talked about or passed on to others without their consent.

However, the legal principle that 'the welfare of the child is paramount' means that considerations of confidentiality should not be allowed to override the right of children to be protected from harm. Everyone in our organisation, including children, must be aware that they can never promise to keep secrets. However, information of a confidential nature will only be communicated on a 'need to know' basis.

In any situation where there is an allegation or suspicion of abuse, it is important that the rights of both the victim and the alleged perpetrator are protected by ensuring that only those who need to know are given the relevant information.

This will mean, at the very least, informing:

- The designated officer responsible for safeguarding
- Where relevant, a statutory child protection organisation;
- The parent of the child, unless to do so would put the child at further risk;
- The alleged perpetrator;

Informing the parents of a child about whom you are concerned will need to be handled in a sensitive way and should only be undertaken in consultation with a statutory agency.

Any individual under suspicion whether or not he or she is a staff member or volunteer has a right to be notified of the cause of the concern. This is another matter that will need careful consideration and should only be undertaken in consultation with a statutory agency.

Depending on the outcome of our initial enquiries, staff and other agencies that have contact with either the child concerned or the alleged perpetrator may need to be given brief details of the incident and subsequent action. Seek advice from the statutory agencies about who should be told, when they should be told, and the kind of information that is appropriate to share.

All information of a personal nature will be stored in a safe and secure setting.