



# **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY & PROCEDURES**



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## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY & PROCEDURES**

This Safeguarding policy is based on guidelines outlined in the following documents;

Safeguarding Guidance for Children and Young People in Sport resource 2019:  
<https://www.sportireland.ie/sites/default/files/2020-01/safeguarding-guidance.pdf>

Children (NI) Order 1995

Keeping Children Safe - Our Duty to Care 2017. The publication of this Guidance is supported by the Department of Health. <https://www.volunteernow.co.uk/app/uploads/2019/04/Keeping-Children-Safe-Our-Duty-to-Care.pdf>

Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People Department of Health 201

Protection of Children And Vulnerable Adults (NI) Order

### **Introduction**

Netball Northern Ireland is committed to a delivery of service that promotes good practice and protects children from harm. Members and staff within the organisation accept and recognise their responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues that may cause children harm.

Our Safeguarding Policy covers a wide range of child-centred service areas, which include:

- Regional Development Academy Activities and Programmes
- National Squad Activities and Programmes
- International Events, Activities and Programmes
- League and Competition Fixtures for all NNI Activities and Programmes
- Any other NNI organised events that involve children

The Safeguarding Policy is for all those involved in the sport with a particular significance to those in regulated positions, including full-time, part-time, casual staff, Coaches, Board Member, volunteers and external service providers.

All will be subject to relevant recommended checks and safeguarding training. 'For the purposes of this policy a child is defined as a person under 18'

This policy is supported by a document package containing relevant forms and templates which can be accessed on the Netball Northern Ireland website.

### **Aim of the policy**

The policy aims to ensure compliance with the Children (Northern Ireland) Order (1995) and that all children participating in activities and programmes organised by NNI do so in as safe a manner as possible.

### **Objectives of the policy**

This policy sets out to

1. Clarify NNI's responsibilities in respect of Safeguarding.
2. Outline why within the context of NNI's activities and programmes Safeguarding is important.
3. Identify the specific steps NNI is taking in fulfilment of its responsibilities including:
  - In terms of employment procedures.
  - Staff training.
  - Guidance for its own staff and other organisations involved in NNI activities and programmes.

## Background

The **Children (Northern Ireland) Order (1995)** came into force on 4<sup>th</sup> November 1996 and is based on a clear and consistent set of principles designed with the common aim of promoting the welfare of children. It reforms, consolidates and harmonises most of the public and private law relating to children, in a single coherent statutory framework.

In practical terms, this means we have a responsibility to provide a safe environment for children and young people, in which their welfare is of paramount importance. It also means we need to inform and consult parents and carers about any decision affecting their child unless to do so would put the child at further risk. Parents also have a responsibility to ensure that their children grow and develop in a safe environment.

## Policy Statement

The Board of Netball Northern Ireland confirms its commitment to good practice which protects children from harm. Staff and volunteers accept their responsibility to provide an environment which always promotes the safety of the child at all times. Netball NI wish to ensure that this fundamental principle takes precedence over all other considerations.

In fulfilment of the responsibilities placed on it in terms of "Duty of Care" NNI specifically undertakes to:

- Identify all those posts where staff are in regulated positions and are directly involved in working with children.
- Ensure that we adopt a child centred approach and empathetic coaching styles.
- Adopt safeguarding guidelines through codes of conduct for members and all adults working within the organisation, including Coaches, Adults and volunteers.
- Ensure that a Code of Conduct is prepared for all staff/volunteers as part of their induction, setting out the priority the NNI attaches to ensuring the safety of children making use of its activities and programmes.
- Create a culture of safety by raising staff/volunteer awareness about the issue of child protection and developing guidance on 'whistle blowing'.
- Adopt the Code of Conduct set as a guide to all staff in regulated positions working with young people. This will be communicated to staff through safeguarding training, circulation of information leaflets and at their induction.
- Advise staff of Disciplinary Procedures at induction, should they breach the Code of Conduct.
- Ensure NNI has Codes of behaviour in place for participants who take part in NNI led activities and programmes. Including coaches/officials, young people and parents
- Establishment of reporting procedures for concerns about a member of staff and concerns external to Netball Northern Ireland.
- Establish procedures for recording child protection concerns and breaches of our safeguarding standards.
- Establish procedures relating specifically to bullying and peer abuse transport, away trips and use of photography.
- Ensure that all children are treated equally
- Regularly review and monitor Safeguarding Procedures by the NNI Board (every 3 years minimum)
- Appoint a Designated Officer(s) to whom staff & children can refer any concerns about poor practice or suspected child abuse or related issues. This Officer is to liaise with relevant authorities if an investigation is required
- Ensure complaints, grievances and disciplinary procedures are included within our constitution.
- Ensure careful recruitment, selection and management procedures. These procedures will include regular support and supervision to all staff and volunteers.
- Share information with parents and children and others who may need to know.
- Ensure good and safe working/playing practices.

- Be involved in training made available through various agencies and to strengthen links with these agencies.
- To Promote best practice and provide advice and guidance to all affiliated members of NNI and to lead by example as regards Safeguarding procedures.

NNI provides several activities and programmes for children mainly squad training and competition at a regional and national level as well as school and club competition and participation events. In doing so, NNI recognises the clear responsibilities placed on it under the Cooperating to Safeguarding Children and Young People in terms of fulfilling its "Duty of Care" in respect of those young people participating in such activities.

The welfare of children and young people is paramount to Netball Northern Ireland. It is NNI's intention through this policy to protect as far as possible children involved in any activities it directly or indirectly organises, from all types of abuse. NNI will endeavour to provide an environment which values and protects children, in all aspects and at every level. See Equality Statement.

It is generally recognised that recreational activity including sport can contribute positively to the development of individuals not just physically but personally, socially and emotionally. This can only happen if those young people participating in activities do so safely, under the auspices of an informed forward thinking and enlightened employee or volunteer operating in an accepted ethical framework. Children participating in activities should be ensured of a fun, enjoyable and safe place to do so. They cannot feel happy or content if there are actions preventing this from occurring, therefore measures should be taken to reduce the risk of a child being harmed before they occur.

Some NNI staff and volunteers will find themselves in positions of considerable influence – particularly when supervising young people. Staff and volunteers therefore have a profound responsibility through their daily duties to demonstrate and set high moral and ethical standards. In addition, in an age of increasing litigation and with a growing awareness of the incidence of all kinds of abuse, it is essential that staff and volunteers stop to consider their own practise to ensure that children's welfare is paramount and that their behaviour cannot be misconstrued or deemed to contravene accepted good practice. Good practice protects everybody including:

- the child
- the employee / volunteer
- Netball Northern Ireland

### **Equality Statement**

Netball Northern Ireland endorses the principle of sports equality and will strive to ensure that everyone who wishes to be involved in Netball, whether as casual participants, team members, volunteers, coaches, officials, office-bearers in clubs or those within Netball NI:

- has a genuine and equal opportunity to participate to the full extent of their own ambitions and abilities, without regard to their age, sex, gender identity, disability, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, religion, race, ethnic origin, socioeconomic status or sexual orientation; and
- can be assured of an environment in which their rights, dignity and individual worth are respected, and in particular that they are able to enjoy their sport without the threat of intimidation, victimisation, harassment or abuse.

### **Confidentiality Statement**

Netball Northern Ireland employees and volunteers will never promise to keep secrets. However, information of a confidential nature will only be communicated on a 'need to know' basis, with the welfare of the child paramount.

Considerations of confidentiality will not be allowed to override the rights of children or young people to be protected from harm.

The Safeguarding Policy is displayed on the NNI Website and a copy of the full policy can be requested from the Netball Northern Ireland Office, contact details can be found on the website also.

### **Awareness of the Issues**

Background knowledge in relation to child abuse, the general principles of child protection and the ability to recognise and respond to abuse are important issues. Of primary concern for Netball Northern Ireland is the issue of safeguarding of our young people currently within our membership. However, being cognisant of the indicators of abuse in respect of young members caused by others outside of this setting, is of an equal importance for the safety and wellbeing of that child.

### **What is Child Abuse?**

Child abuse is the term used to describe ways in which children are harmed, usually by adults but also by other children and often by those they know and trust. Abuse of a child often takes place in the home, in school or in their sporting/leisure/community environment. Child abuse is a very emotive and difficult subject, especially if you think your child or a child you know is being harmed. It refers to the damage done to a child's physical or mental health.

It is essential that every adult involved in children's activities follow agreed Codes of Conduct and engage in best practice so that the environment in which the children play and take part is as safe and enjoyable as possible. Netball NI will actively promote this principle of good practice and publicise the best advice to all coaches, administrators, officials, teachers and parents/guardians.

### **Cooperating to Safeguarding Children and Young People 2017 formally recognises five types of abuse:**

**Physical Abuse** is deliberately physically hurting a child. It might take a variety of different forms, including hitting, biting, pinching, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating a child.

**Sexual Abuse** occurs when others use and exploit children sexually for their own gratification or gain or the gratification of others. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape, or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via e-technology). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

**Emotional Abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse, and it can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development. Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child that they are worthless, or unloved and inadequate. It may include not giving a child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them, or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. Emotional abuse may involve bullying – including online bullying through social networks, online games or mobile phones – by a child's peers.

**Neglect** is the failure to provide for a child's basic needs, whether it be adequate food, clothing, hygiene, supervision or shelter that is likely to result in the serious impairment of a child's health or development. Children who are neglected often also suffer from other types of abuse.



**Exploitation** is the intentional ill-treatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over a child or young person; to take selfish or unfair advantage of a child or young person or situation, for personal gain. It may manifest itself in many forms such as child labour, slavery, servitude, engagement in criminal activity, begging, benefit or other financial fraud or child trafficking. It extends to the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of children for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation can be sexual in nature.

### **Bullying Behaviour**

The Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum ([www.endbullying.org.uk](http://www.endbullying.org.uk)) defines bullying as the repeated behaviour that intentionally hurts, harms use of power, by one or more persons, intentionally to harm, hurt or adversely affect the rights or needs of another or others.

It can take many forms, but the three main types are;

- Physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft)
- Verbal (e.g. racist or sectarian remarks, threats, name-calling)
- Emotional (e.g. isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of his peer group).

The risk of bullying behaviour and harassment by adults and by children must be addressed by taking active steps to prevent it occurring and to intervene promptly and decisively when it comes to light.

Bullying behaviour may be prevented by:

- Raising awareness of bullying behaviour as an unacceptable behaviour
- Encouraging children to report bullying
- Comprehensive supervision
- Providing a supportive environment for those who experience bullying behaviour

In defining peer abuse or the more commonly acknowledged abuse of children by adults the similarities are far more noteworthy than the differences. There is a strong correlation between peer abuse and other forms of abuse in terms of the types of behaviours exhibited, their impact, and outcomes and to some extent prevalence and in this regard, it can be clearly demonstrated that peer abuse should be considered a form of child abuse.

Adults often do not interpret bullying behaviours as 'abusive' but as 'conflict'. However, 'conflict' constitutes mutually aggressive interactions between peers, not the abuse of one individual at the hands of another, more powerful individual. The severity or seriousness of a bullying behaviour cannot be determined in terms of actions or frequency. Whilst policy and guidelines play an important role in addressing incidents of bullying behaviour, cases should be treated individually and dealt with depending on the effect and circumstances surrounding them.

Actions can be changed, but feelings are a personal issue. Those dealing with bullying behaviour incidents should avoid judging the effect of the situation by their own feelings and consider the feelings of the victim.

Netball Northern Ireland believes that bullying as a behaviour, will always remain unacceptable behaviour due to the severe and distressing effects it can have.

Central to this policy is the well-being of the child(ren) impacted by bullying behaviour. Prevention and reaction strategies should aim to protect the victims and potential victims from further abuse. Punishments and sanctions, as essential as they may appear, are secondary to the safety and well-being of a child(ren) impacted by bullying behaviour. After an allegation of suspected bullying behaviour, staff/volunteers should take measures to address the situation and protect the child(ren) impacted by bullying behaviour from further abuse. Netball Northern Ireland does not accept that anything should stand in the way of a procedure to ensure the protection of a child or young person.

Our first concern is the safety of, and well-being of the child(ren) impacted by bullying behaviour, not the punishment of the perpetrator. We acknowledge that at times sanctions and interventions may be necessary but that the ultimate aim is to stop the bullying behaviour and protect the victim from further

abuse. Children and young people who abuse also require support to understand the effects on others and to develop more social and communication skills to change their behaviour, and this should be made available through the appropriate agencies.

All staff should have a clear understanding of procedures in responding to bullying behaviour allegations and NNI's Safeguarding reporting procedures should be followed.

### Indicators of Abuse

Even for those experienced in working with child safeguarding, it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. It is unlikely that our staff will be experts, and we should also stress that under the Children (NI) Order 1995, the relevant Health and Social Services Trust has a statutory duty to ensure the welfare of a child.

The following is a list of some indicators of abuse, but it is not exhaustive:

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unexplained bruising in soft tissue areas</li> <li>• Repeated injuries</li> <li>• Black eyes</li> <li>• Injuries to the mouth</li> <li>• Torn or bloodstained clothing</li> <li>• Burns or scalds</li> <li>• Bites</li> <li>• Fractures</li> <li>• Marks from implements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unexplained changes in behaviour – becoming withdrawn or aggressive</li> <li>• Difficulty in making friends</li> <li>• Distrustful of adults or excessive attachment to adults</li> <li>• Sudden drop in performance</li> <li>• Changes in attendance pattern</li> <li>• Inappropriate sexual awareness, behaviour or language</li> <li>• Reluctance to remove clothing</li> </ul>

**This list is not meant to be complete, and the presence of one or more of these indicators is not proof that abuse is actually taking place. We stress, however, that it is not the responsibility of managers, any NNI volunteer or staff member to prove that abuse is taking place. Instead, it is their responsibility to act on any concerns by reporting them to the Designated Officer.**

It is our responsibility to provide a safe environment for children by employing people who are suitable to work with, or to have contact with, children. We do this by having effective and clear procedures for our staff to report any suspicions, through our own procedures, to the relevant Health and Social Services Trust.

### Possible indicators of inappropriate behaviour

People who pose a threat to children can be very skilled at avoiding detection. Continued vigilance is important and there are some behaviours that may alert you to the possibility of abuse. You should be particularly vigilant if someone:

- Pays an unusual amount of attention to children and provides them with presents, money or 'favours'.
- Seeks out vulnerable children.
- Seeks opportunities to spend significant amounts of time alone with a single child or a small group of children on a regular basis.
- Encourages secretiveness about their activities and time spent with children.
- Takes a child or children to his/her own home.
- Is vague about previous employment.

- Has an unusual amount of physical contact with a child or children;
- Touches child in an inappropriate manner.
- Talks to children in an inappropriate manner.
- Avoids close supervision and management of work.

### **Guidelines for responding to an allegation**

There is not one simple set of rules to follow when you respond to these situations. However, the following key points should guide the actions of staff and volunteers who are told of abuse.

#### **DO**

- Stay calm
- Listen & hear. Give the person time to say what they want
- Let the child talk- don't interview – Ask open questions but as few as possible
- Reassure them that they are safe and they have done the right thing in telling
- Tell the person what will happen next and it will be dealt with appropriately.
- Explain that you must tell, but you will maintain confidentiality
- Record in writing what was said as soon as possible
- Report to someone else in the organisation – “the designated person” immediately
- Record your report

#### **DON'T**

- Panic
- Promise to keep secrets
- Question unless for clarification
- Enquire into the details of the abuse
- Make a child repeat the story unnecessarily
- Rush into actions
- Make/pass judgment on alleged abuser
- Take sole responsibility
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**Note** – It is essential that you record the exact information (using the child's words) rather than recording your interpretation of the Child's statements.

### **Dealing with concerns about a child**

A member of staff or volunteer may have concerns about a child's behaviour or something the child has told them. These may only be vague concerns and not evidence that child abuse has occurred. It is important that these are taken seriously.

It is essential that:

- A written record is made of concerns that result from observations made or information received. That record may be made jointly with the organisation's Designated Officer after discussion
- The Designated Officer may need to seek further advice from an appropriate organisation (i.e. NSPCC, Social Services, PSNI etc.)
- Netball Northern Ireland's child protection procedures should be followed



If a member of staff / volunteer feels that concerns are not being taken seriously, this should again be discussed with the Designated Officer or a more senior colleague. If necessary, the individual can contact statutory agencies directly:

- Regional Emergency Social Work service. Available 5.00 PM – 9.00 AM Monday to Thursday and 5.00 PM on Friday to 9.00 AM on Monday. There is a 24-hour cover over public holidays 028 9504 9999
- NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000
- The local Police station. 02890 650222

### **Reasonable Grounds for concern**

There are many reasons a coach/volunteer may be concerned about the welfare or protection of a child or young person. Statutory authorities should always be informed when a person has reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been, is being, or is at risk of being abused or neglected”.

It is important to remember that children/young people are sometimes abused by members of their own family, by peers or by others outside the family environment such as strangers, workers or trusted adults. The following are examples of reasonable grounds for concern:

- Evidence, for example an injury or behaviour, that is consistent with abuse and is unlikely to have been caused in any other way.
- Any concern about possible sexual abuse.
- Consistent signs that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.
- A child saying or indicating by other means that he or she has been abused.
- Admission or indication by an adult or a child of an alleged abuse they committed.
- An account from a person who saw a child being abused.

Wherever appropriate, any issues should be checked with the parents/guardians when considering whether a concern exists, **unless doing so may further endanger the child or the person considering making the report.** It is important to remember that abuse is not always committed through personal contact with a child or young person, sometimes it is perpetrated through social media or the use of information and communication technology.

### **What NOT to do**

If there are concerns that a child is perhaps being abused: -

- Never do nothing and assume someone else will do something
- Never question or push the child for more information or explanation. This could affect any subsequent criminal investigation.
- Never discuss the concerns with the suspected abuser. This could have implications for criminal proceedings. In addition, there is always the possibility that the suspected abuser might threaten the child to make them deny anything has happened. Only after consultation and advice from statutory agencies should the NNI representative approach the person suspected of abuse to ask them to stand down from their role.

### **Guidelines for reporting allegations / incidents**

1. If a member of staff has a concern about a safeguarding issue they should first contact the Designated Child Protection Officer for Netball NI. The designated officer’s details are displayed on the website and are circulated annually to all members.
2. The Designated Officer(s) follow the current reporting procedure already in place
3. If the Designated Officer cannot be contacted then the Chair of Netball Northern Ireland should be contacted.
4. Record all incidents reported or observed on an Incident Form and 1 copy of Incident Report Form given to the Designated Officer within 24 hours
5. Ensure confidentiality – only “need to know basis” and all reports will be stored in a safe and secure environment

## Dealing with concerns about a colleague

Most people who work with children are well motivated and would never harm a child. Unfortunately, a few do, and it is essential that NNI creates a culture that makes staff willing and comfortable to voice their concerns, particularly those about someone with whom they work or whom they know. Again, the organisation's safeguarding procedures should be followed (See Appendices 8 to 10).

Inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour or communication, favouritism or negligence are examples of what may constitute a concern about the conduct of a member of staff. An allegation about a staff member occurs when a child, parent or other staff member reports specific unacceptable behaviour where a child has been harmed or abused in some way. Allegations against staff must be referred to a Designated Officer. In the case of allegations against one of the Designated Officers this should be reported to another Netball NI Board Member or directly to a statutory agency.

During an investigation, support should be given both to the individual who voices concerns and to the suspected abuser. Once the investigation is completed, the organisation must decide what action, if any is necessary to prevent a similar situation arising again.

### Staff need to know:

- What constitutes a "concern" and, "allegation"
- Who to report to and their contact details
- How to access the pro forma used for reporting concerns and allegations
- Contact details for PSNI and Social Services in the event that a Designated Officer is not available in an emergency
- Netball Northern Ireland will support them through the reporting procedure
- Their primary concern as the first person that suspects or is told of possible abuse is to report it to the designated person and ensure the concern is taken seriously

**Under no circumstances should any staff member attempt to deal with the problem of abuse alone.**

### Duty to refer to Disclosure and Barring Service

Under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order, all organisations have a duty to refer information to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in certain circumstances. In all cases there are two conditions, both of which must be met, to trigger a referral to the DBS by a regulated activity provider.

A referral MUST be made to the DBS if Netball NI:

- a. withdraws permission for an individual to engage in regulated activity, or would have done so had that individual not resigned, retired, been made redundant or been transferred to a position which is not regulated activity; because
- b. they think that the individual has:
  - engaged in relevant conduct;
  - satisfied the criteria set out in the Harm Test; or
  - received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence.

If both conditions have been met, NNI must refer the information on to the DBS.

The referral must be made to the DBS when NNI has (in following with good practice) gathered sufficient evidence as part of its investigations to support its reasons for withdrawing permission for the person in question to engage in regulated activity, consulted with the relevant social services or police if appropriate.

Netball NI must also be informed if any club removes an individual from engaging in regulated activity for reasons outlined above to enable NNI to consider the information and decide about the persons coaching award.

Additional information on the DBS and the referral process can be found on the DBS website:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>

### **Responding to Non-Recent Allegations of Abuse**

It is possible that non-recent allegations of abuse can be made a number of years after the actual incident. This may be because of a change in circumstances for either the survivor or the alleged perpetrator. Any non-recent allegations must follow the current NNI safeguarding procedures. If there are grounds for concern then statutory authorities must be informed (Police or /HSCT Gateway Teams). The following points should also be considered;

- Clearly establish with the adult complainant if there may be any children currently at risk of harm from the person they are saying abused them as a child.
- Advise the person making the complaint that they should inform the Police. Encourage them to do so while acknowledging the brave steps they have already taken in beginning to talk about their experience as a child. It is important that the person knows that there is a likelihood that an abuser will not have stopped abusing after their individual abuse ended and if the person harmed them they could be continuing to cause harm to others. This needs to be done without reinforcing the inappropriate guilt the survivor may already have for not coming forward earlier.
- If the complainant refuses to talk to the statutory authorities but has provided you with enough identifying factors then this information MUST be shared with the police. This breach of the complainants' confidence is only appropriate if there is any potential that the alleged perpetrator is still a risk to children or could face prosecution (i.e. they are alive). Remember, the welfare of any children currently at risk is paramount. This must take priority over any request of confidentiality from the person providing you with the information/complaint. This should be explained to them at the earliest possible stage
- Offer support to the complainant when making a formal complaint to the police.
- Signpost the complainant to support agencies that can provide counselling for example; In Northern Ireland - NEXUS <http://www.nexusni.org/>

Belfast 028 9032 6803  
L'derry 028 7126 0566  
Enniskillen 028 6632 0046

When an adult making a complaint chooses not to report the matter to the police and you have already discussed the possibility of any child still being at risk you MUST follow NNI reporting procedures and inform the Police or Gateway Team immediately of any identifying features of the allegation including the name of the alleged abuser. The person making the complaint should be informed that this is the organisation's moral and legal responsibility (Criminal Law Act 1967). If the individual wishes to remain anonymous this should be respected but again explaining that without any further co-operation there may be little action the Police can take to protect others. Encourage them to talk directly to the Gateway

Teams, if not the Police, to enable social services to consider if there is any action they can take to protect children at risk, as their threshold for intervention is lower than the evidence required for any criminal justice prosecution.

### **Allegations Against NNI Volunteers/staff**

Staff working with children may feel vulnerable to accusations of poor practice or child abuse. This may be because of a misunderstanding of what has happened or a genuine mistake. If allegations are made, it is important to:

- Stay calm;
- Co-operate with the investigation;
- Seek advice and support from a manager or, if appropriate, a professional organisation, union, family or friends;
- Ensure that clear records are kept of any meetings attended, discussions or correspondence about the allegations;
- Avoid discussing the allegations with the person who made them.

### **Role and Responsibility of Designated Child Protection Officers**

The Designated People within Netball Northern Ireland are:

**NAME: KAREN ROLLO**

**Mobile: 077 3894 7389**

**Telephone: 028 90522730**

**NAME: Lisa Rickett**

**Mobile: 07850102761**

**Telephone: 02890765768**

The named people shall be made known to all members of staff as the designated officers to whom all concerns will be addressed. If the concern is about the designated officers, please report to the Chair or another board member of Netball Northern Ireland.

### **The designated officer's role is to:**

- Promote the implementation of Netball Northern Ireland's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures among staff.
- Be able to communicate effectively with staff to ensure the widespread dissemination of the Netball Northern Ireland's Code of Conduct
- Understand Safeguarding Standards for Sport to ensure they can act as an information service to other staff members.
- Advise Netball Northern Ireland of the safeguarding training needs for staff members.
- Keep only relevant people within the organisation informed about any action taken and any further action required.
- Monitor and review the safeguarding policy and procedures on a regular basis, including advice on recruitment and selection.
- Ensure the maintenance of individual case records; what action is taken; other agencies informed, ensuring confidentiality is maintained.
- Establish a contact with a senior member of social services staff responsible for safeguarding in the organisation's catchment area.
- Ensure that appropriate information is available to social services / police at the time of a referral
- Ensure the safe keeping of any case material/reports in a confidential and secure manner



## Recruitment and Selection of Staff

Most people who want to work with children are well motivated and without them organisations could not operate. Unfortunately, some individuals will try to use organisations to gain inappropriate contact with children. Good recruitment and selection procedures will help screen out and discourage those who are not suitable from joining an organisation.

Good recruitment and selection procedures benefit everyone. Staff will have a clearly defined role. This will enhance their self-confidence, which will have a positive impact on children they are working with. Netball NI will ensure the following:

- Volunteers and coaches who represent NNI are carefully selected, trained and supervised, using agreed recruitment and selection procedures.
- All new coaches/ volunteers working with children or young people must complete the NNI application form.
- Declaration of past convictions or cases pending. (completing a Disclosure Certificate Application Form is a pre-requisite to approval to coach)
- ALL volunteers/coaches must agree to abide by the organisation's Safeguarding Policy, and all are required to sign the Code of Conduct.
- Any concerns or objections regarding suitability of a coach must be submitted to the "designated person". These matters will be dealt with by the designated officer with appropriate action taken including a formal response in writing to the concerned party if required.

## Staff/Volunteer Training

All staff will receive inductions and safeguarding training appropriate to their role. Training will be updated and reviewed regularly for new staff and in line with changing legislation All Staff in regulated positions (including designated officers and Netball NI Office bearers) should have safeguarding training that includes a basic awareness and understanding of safeguarding issues and Netball Northern Ireland's Safeguarding Policy, procedure and guidelines.

- Appointment of volunteers/coaches will be based on their current or previous experience either playing or coaching Netball. OR their skill set appropriate for other roles.
- Education and training in the basics of safeguarding will be required of all coaches/volunteers/management committee members working with children or young members.
- Netball Northern Ireland are committed to continuous updating and review of our current Safeguarding Children & Young People Policy.

Safeguarding training should include

- Basic awareness of child protection issues
- Good Practice in coaching including Codes of Conduct

Training will be carefully selected to ensure it is sufficient. For instance, a 1-hour training session is unlikely to be very useful. A minimum of 3 hours is required for basic awareness raising & we will seek that training from a specific training provider with experience and knowledge of good practice in sport.

- Ensuring that all new coaches have attended safeguarding awareness workshop within three months of taking up their post. This opportunity should also be made available to parents and other volunteers to enable a culture of a child-focused club to prevail.
- All staff and volunteers should receive induction and training appropriate to their role. Training should be updated and reviewed regularly for new staff/ volunteers and in line with changing legislation. Validation period: Volunteers should refresh their safeguarding knowledge every 3 years.
- Expected attendees: any person working with, interacts with or who is involved in the planning/ administration of activities or events with young people
- Renewal: Safeguarding Children and Young people in Sport (SC&YPS) certificate may be renewed by attendance at SC&YPS (face to face workshop) or Safeguarding Refresher (e-learning module)



During the Safeguarding Children and Young People in Sport training, you'll learn to:

- understand the potential importance of your role in the lives of children and young people and what you can do to safeguarding them.
- identify best practice procedures and behaviour to safeguard children and young people in sport.
- recognise and respond if abuse/poor practice is suspected.

Safeguarding Refresher e-learning module available from Sport NI <http://courses.sportni.net/> . This is a free course aimed primarily at those who have previously attended a Sport Northern Ireland Safeguarding Children and Young People in Sport three-hour, face to face workshop or equivalent. Individuals may want to refresh their knowledge or are required to do so to retain their coaching award.

### **Adult/Child Ratios**

Supervision must be adequate, whether at a sole venue or on a journey or visit. It is for leaders in charge to exercise their professional judgement in deciding the level of supervision depending upon the age and ability level of the participants taking part.

Supervision levels for all NNI organised activities are identified prior to each event/activity organised. Supervision levels for each event are finalised within a risk assessment carried out prior to the event and the Designated Officer or NNI Insurance Company should make final approval. The following ratios may provide some guidance:

Activity/Netball Session	1 Adult to 10 Participants (we recommend having two adults present)
Away Trips/Events	1 Adult to 8 Participants

There should be one additional staff member for every 10 extra children or part thereof.

**Note:** It is best practice to have a minimum of 2 adults for every activity. For example, even for a ratio of 1:10 there should be two available adults at the venue to supervise the activity.

**The ratio of staff and volunteers to children with disabilities is dependent on the needs of the individual child. Ratios may need to be reviewed depending on the risk assessment of a particular activity.**