

Merseyside County Netball Association – Safeguarding Children and Young People in  
Netball Policy (December 2024)  
Review date – September 2026  
Author: Safeguarding Lead: Ann Tuft



# **Merseyside County Netball Association**

## **Safeguarding Children and Young People in Netball**

### **Policy**

#### **Contents**

1. Purpose and Scope
2. What is abuse?
3. Roles and Responsibilities
4. Duty of care
5. Wellbeing
6. Contact The League

## **1. Purpose and Scope**

Merseyside County Netball Association (MCNA), considers the safety and wellbeing of young people as central to its values. As a netball club we accept our responsibility for providing guidance and support to all members to ensure that netball is enjoyable and safe.

This Policy sets out our approach to fulfilling our commitment to creating and maintaining a safe and enjoyable environment for the young people who take part in the sport of netball. The League requires all members, connected participants and staff to abide by this Policy and all relating procedures and practice.

This policy applies to all members of the county. This policy is expected to be followed by all; whether at academy, or an organised competition or event.

Everyone has a responsibility for safeguarding the welfare of young people and this is no less the case in netball. Specified people have identified responsibility within the Reporting a Concern process, but they can only act on the information which others provide to them.

Some concerns may relate to a young person's general wellbeing, rather than due to them being subject to abuse. The League accepts its role in supporting the netball community with offering assistance to these individuals.

Where necessary, The League will take Disciplinary Action against any members and connected participants where breach of this Policy or the Codes of Conduct and Disciplinary Regulations is alleged.

This Policy operates in conjunction with the legislation governing safeguarding and protecting young people and The League works with external partners to ensure best practice is implemented. It is also to be read in conjunction with the Codes of Conduct and all other relevant League policies and procedures.

We believe that;

- Children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind
- We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe, and to practice in a way that protects them.

We recognise that:

Merseyside County Netball Association – Safeguarding Children and Young People in Netball Policy (December 2024)

Review date – September 2026

Author: Safeguarding Lead: Ann Tuft

- The welfare of children is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take.
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting them
- Appointing a nominated Safeguarding lead
- Adopting child protection and safeguarding best practice through our code of conduct for volunteers and players
- Providing effective support and training measures so that all volunteers know about and follow
- Recruiting and selecting volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- Recording, storing, and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance
- Sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children and their families
- Making sure that children and young people know where to go for help if they have a concern
- Using our safeguarding and child protection procedures to share concerns appropriately
- Using our procedures to manage any allegations against volunteers appropriately
- Creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and dealing effectively with any bullying that does arise
- Ensuring that we provide a safe physical and emotional environment for children, young people and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with regulatory guidance
- Building a safeguarding culture where volunteers, children, young people, and their families, treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns.

## **2. What is Abuse?**

Abuse is term used to describe the ways in which young people may be harmed by others.

It can happen inside and outside the home, but wherever it happens, everyone has a responsibility to act to protect the child from harm. Abuse results in harm to young people’s physical, mental, or emotional health and/or development.

It can be committed by an adult or another child/young person and be by way of an act or a failure to act.

Familiarising yourself with the forms of abuse and thinking about whether what you see and hear may be a sign that there are causes for concern which fall into one or more of these categories, or that of wellbeing, will help you to make assessment of when you need to report your concerns.

If you have any concerns of abuse, report them. The League Safeguarding Officer will determine if action is required. In the world of sport, there are numerous occasions when abuse may occur, intentionally or unintentionally. Some concerns may fall within the umbrella term “poor practice”, and this is a safeguarding concern, but not a form of abuse, and may be appropriately dealt with at the County level, with support from the League and County Safeguarding Officer.

## **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

MCNA, fulfils its safeguarding responsibilities by providing advice and guidance to county members.

The League has an appointed Safeguarding Officer, who is responsible for formulating the League’s approach to safeguarding; supporting the broader League to implement this Policy.

MCNA is responsible for ensuring the environment in which young people engage in netball is a safe one which provides them with a fun experience. MCNA will ensure that all those who carry out regulated activity have had the necessary, current DBS checks and are cleared to work with young people.

#### **4. Duty of Care**

MCNA accepts its duty of care for the young people in the club and we will take reasonable measures to ensure that we provide activities and an environment that is safe and enjoyable.

MCNA has a responsibility to take all reasonable care for the safety of the young people involved and those leading sessions act “in loco parentis” and are expected to act as a reasonably prudent parent would.

They consider the reasonable steps to show they have acted to a reasonable standard of care. This includes:

- Adopting the all policies and procedures of The League
- Ensuring that every member of the club and their parent/carer is informed who the League Safeguarding Officer is
- Familiarisation with the Safeguarding Young People in Netball Policy
- Ensuring relevant training is provided and kept up to date for county Safeguarding Officer, coaches and the members of the county
- Ensuring everyone knows how to report a concern

There will also be:

- A current register of attendees
- A current register of contact details, including emergency contact
- Confidentiality retained details on any medical conditions, allergies, special needs etc
- First aid provision available at all times, at the club and when off site, and a trained First Aider in attendance
- Current risk assessments for the premises and activities carried out.
- County should ensure that the young people in their care only take part in authorised and insured activities with suitably qualified instructors/coaches.

Coaches have a duty of care to ensure that the activities organised are appropriate to the capabilities of each young person in their care. They should adhere to the standards set for them by the qualifications they have achieved and not seek to operate at a level which is beyond their current qualification.

## **5. Wellbeing**

Many concerns about the welfare of young people are about their general health and happiness, their wellbeing, rather than about issues of potential abuse. The evidence our safeguarding case management process shows is that these issues are significantly more frequent than concerns about abuse. The League believes that sport offers many positives in the lives of its young participants and that caring about the welfare of young people is part of the safeguarding duty which we all have. People in positions of trust can be a great influence in the lives of young people and so have the potential to notice changes, be available to talk to and to offer advice.

Young people may manifest signs of behaviour which cause you concern. We recognise that not all issues will be picked up by Children’s Services as they do not meet their threshold of ‘significant risk of harm’ and that local support may be the most effective way of helping the young person. We can assist with identifying and supporting the young person by raising levels of awareness and acting as a sign posting service to resources and organisations which provide support for parent’s/carers or for the young people directly.

## **6. Contact**

If you have a concern about safeguarding, please contact the County Safeguarding Lead Ann Tuft.