

**CONSTITUTION**

**SAFE GUARDING & PROTECTING CHILDREN/VUNERABLE YOUNG ADULTS**

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

**NNC is a young person’s netball club which is open to all girls age 7-18. The club offers places on a first come first served basis regardless of ability, race or religion.**

**Our Child Protection policy shows that we believe that the welfare of children is paramount in everything we do.**

**Nat’s Netball Club Safeguarding Officer –**

**Debbie Colton –** **Debbie@familycolton.co.uk** **07779572407**

**Nat’s Netball Club Child Protection Officer –**

**Natalie Kenton** **natalie@natsnetballclub.co.uk** **07966397301**

**Debbie Colton –** **Debbie@familycolton.co.uk** **07779572407**

**Our Child Protection Statement:**

Nat’s Netball Club has a duty of care to safeguard from harm all children that are involved in any Nat’s Netball Club activities. All children have a right to protection. The needs of children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account. Nat’s Netball Club will ensure the safety and protection of all children involved in Nat’s Netball Club through adherence to the Safeguarding and Protecting guidelines adopted by England Netball.

A child is anyone under 18 years old

This policy focuses on prevention and how Nat’s Netball Club should respond once risk of abuse is suspected, or has been identified or disclosed.

Nat’s Netball Club believes that:

* The welfare of the child is paramount
* All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse
* All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
* All staff (paid/unpaid) working for Nat’s Netball Club have a responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate officer

**The Aim**

The aim of Nat’s Netball Club’s Safeguarding and Protection Policy is to promote good practice:

* Providing children with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of Nat’s Netball Club
* Allowing all staff/volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues

**Good Practice Guidelines:**

All Nat’s Netball Club’s personnel both voluntary and paid will be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour when working with young people.

**Best Practice Guide:**

* We will always work in an open environment e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and not promising to keep secrets
* We will treat all young people equally, and with respect and dignity
* We will always put the welfare of each child first, before winning or achieving goals
* We will encourage all our personnel to build balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children to share in the decision-making process
* We will ensure that all activities are fun, enjoyable and promote fair play
* We will keep up to date with the technical skills, qualifications and insurance in netball and youth leadership
* We will encourage our members of staff to be excellent role models – this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people
* We will give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
* We will always secure parental consent in writing giving permission for the administration of emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment if the need arise
* We will keep a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given
* We will ensure that all our personnel have a current DBS certificate and have done a Child Protection workshop and know the procedures for disclosure
* It is policy to ensure that confidentiality is adhered to at all times

**Types of abuse**

The main categories of abuse are listed below, although this is not exhaustive.

**Physical abuse**

Typical examples of physical abuse are slapping, hitting, physical restraint, over-use of medication, pushing, forcing people to do things against their will and depravation of care including food and medication. Typical effects of the physical abuse are bruises, burns, fractures, pressure stores, malnutrition or impaired health. Examples of physical abuse that may occur in sport may be when the nature and intensity of training and competition exceeds the capacity of the athlete; where drugs are used to enhance performance; where physical punishments are used.

**Psychological abuse**

This can be referred to as emotional abuse, mental abuse and verbal abuse. Typical examples of behaviours are blame, insults, humiliation, swearing, threats, neglect and denying a person of the right to make their own decisions. Typical effects are mental anguish, fear and depression. Psychological abuse in sport may occur if athletes are subjected to constant criticism, name-calling, and sarcasm, bullying or unrealistic pressure to perform to high expectations.

**Financial abuse**

Typical examples of behaviour are theft or misuse of property, possessions and insurance, blocking the access of a person to their assets, and extortion.

**Sexual abuse**

This can be any form of sexual exploitation, ranging from the inappropriate use of sexually explicit language that causes offence to forced penetration and includes the involvement of adults in sexual activities they do not fully comprehend or to which they have not given their consent or which violates the sexual taboos or family roles. Typical examples of effects are emotional distress, feelings of guilt or shame and withdrawn behaviour.

**Social abuse**

Typical examples of behaviour are confining a person to a room on their own, preventing them from seeing friends or relatives or having other social contact, denying access to services and refusal of transportation. Typical examples of effects are withdrawn behaviour, prolonged loneliness, sense of isolation and depression.

**Principles of Intervention**

It is not the role of Nat’s Netball Club to determine if an individual is at risk or be experiencing abuse. The identification, assessment, protection and care of children is a multidisciplinary, inter agency responsibility, which should involve anyone with relevant knowledge or involved in providing support to ensure the safety and well-being of individuals concerned. Sports and Youth organisations should work in partnership with statutory agencies.

Where a person appears to be at risk, every reasonable effort will be made to identify the specific problems or dangers. The concerns should be discussed with the individual and also relatives and others providing care and support. Where possible, an agreement should be reached on actions which will reduce the risk to an acceptable level, taking into account the chosen lifestyle of the person concerned. Where a sports organisation identifies a concern this should be reported to the appropriate agency.

Where abuse has been identified it may be necessary to take immediate action to prevent or stop it. This might include ensuring that the alleged abuser no longer has access to the vulnerable person concerned. Where it appears that an offence has been committed against a vulnerable person who is unable to make informed decisions and that person remains in danger of physical harm, the police must be immediately notified.

**Practice that will be avoided**

Spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others will be avoided except in emergencies. If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable they will only occur with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge at NNC or the child’s parents or carers. E.g. a child sustains an injury and needs to go to hospital, or a parent fails to arrive to pick a child up at the end of a session.

If any of the following occur, we will ensure that they are reported immediately to another colleague and the incident is recorded. We will also ensure the parents/carers of the child are informed;

* If we accidentally hurt a young person
* If she seems distressed in any manner
* If a child misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done

**Practice Never to be sanctioned**

The following should never be sanctioned:

* Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
* Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
* Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
* Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
* Reduce a child to tears as a form of control
* Allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
* Do things of a personal nature for children, that they can do for themselves

**Equipment at Events:**

We will ensure that at all of our events there will be procedures and guidelines in place to ensure that inappropriate photography, and filming does not take place.

There is no intention to prevent club leaders, coaches and leaders using video equipment as a legitimate coaching/teaching aid. However, Participants and their parents/carers should be aware that this is part of the programme and appropriate care will be taken in the storing of such films.

**Responding to Suspicions or Allegations**

It is not the responsibility of anyone working in Nat’s Netball Club, in a paid or unpaid capacity to take responsibility or to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However there is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities.

We will assure all staff/volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports his or her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child.

Where there is a complaint against a member of staff there may be three types of investigation

* A criminal investigation
* A child protection investigation
* A disciplinary or misconduct investigation

The results of the police and child protection investigation may well influence the disciplinary investigation, but not necessarily.

**Action if there are concerns**

The following action should be taken if there are concerns

**Poor Practice**

* If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice; the Child Protection Officer will deal with it as a misconduct issue.
* If the allegation is about poor practice by Nat’s Netball Club or the Child Protection Officer at the club, or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to the Safeguarding Officer at Nat’s Netball Club who will decide how to deal with the allegation and whether or not to initiate disciplinary proceedings.

**Suspected Abuse**

* Any suspicion that a child has been abused by either a member of staff or a volunteer should be reported to the Safeguarding Officer, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk.
* The Safeguarding Officer will refer the allegation to the social services department who may involve the police.
* The parents or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social services department.
* The Safeguarding Officer should also notify England Netball who in turn will inform their Safeguarding Officer who will deal with any media enquiries.

**Confidentiality**

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned.

**Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only. This includes the following people:**

* The Designated Safeguarding Officer – Natasha Macintosh Berry
* The parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused.
* The owner of Nat’s Netball Club – Natalie Kenton
* The person making the allegation.
* Social services/police.
* England Netball Regional Development Manager and Child Protection Officer.
* The alleged abuser (and parents if the alleged abuser is a child).\*

*\*Seek social services advice on who should approach alleged abuser.*

Information should be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws (e.g. that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).

**Internal Enquiries and Suspension**

* Nat’s Netball Club will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and social services inquiries.
* Irrespective of the findings of the social services or police inquiries we will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. The welfare of children should always remain paramount.

**Support to Deal with the Aftermath**

* Consideration should be given about what support may be appropriate to children, parents and members of staff. Use of helplines, support groups and open meetings will maintain an open culture and help the healing process. The British Association of Counselling Directory may be a useful resource.
* Consideration should be given about what support may be appropriate to the alleged perpetrator of the abuse.

**Allegations of Previous Abuse**

Allegations of abuse may be made some time after the event (e.g. by an adult who was abused as a child or by a member of staff who is still currently working with children). Where such an allegation is made, the club should follow the procedures as detailed above and report the matter to the social services or the police. This is because other children, either within or outside sport, may be at risk from this person. Anyone who has a previous criminal conviction for offences related to abuse is automatically excluded from working with children. This is reinforced by the details of the Protection of Children Act 1999.

**What to do if there are concerns**

Information passed to the social services or the police must be as helpful as possible, hence the necessity for making a detailed record as soon as possible after the disclosure/concern.

Information should include the following:

* Name of child.
* Age of child and date of birth.
* Home address and telephone number.
* Is the person making the report expressing their own concerns or those of someone else.
* What is the nature of the allegation? Include dates, times, any special factors and other relevant information.
* Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
* A description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Behavioural signs indirect signs?
* Witnesses to the incidents.
* The child’s account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred.
* Have the parents been contacted? If so what has been said?
* Has anyone else been consulted? If so record details.
* If it is not the child making the report has the child concerned been spoken to? If so what was said?
* Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details.

Reporting the matter to the police or social services department should not be delayed by attempts to obtain more information. Wherever possible, referrals telephoned to the social services department should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours. A record should also be made of the name and designation of the social services member of staff or police officer to whom the concerns were passed, together with the time and date of the call, in case any follow-up is needed.