

## Policy

## Child Protection



<b>Responsible</b>	Chief Executive	<b>Date Established</b>	April 2017
<b>Date Review</b>	April 2020		

Netball South is committed to safeguarding the welfare of children participating in netball activities. We recognise our responsibility to protect children from harm and promote safe practise within our netball communities.

For the purposes of this Policy and associated Protocols, a child is someone under the age of 18 years.

The foundation principles of our Policy are –

- A charter outlining our commitment to the protection of children will be established and made readily available by Netball South to our employees, volunteers and netball communities.
- Staff and volunteers involved in working with children under the age of 18, as part of their responsibilities to Netball South, will be required to comply with this Policy, the Charter and its associated Protocols.
- Staff and volunteers will receive the appropriate job instruction, training and support to understand and comply with this Policy, the Charter and its associated Protocols.
- Existing Netball South staff and volunteers will be police vetted by July 2019 as stipulated in the Child Protection Act 2014.
- New Netball South staff and volunteers will be police vetted from 1 May 2017 following approval by the Netball South Board of this policy.
- Job descriptions and person specifications will include responsibility for compliance with the Child Protection Policy and our recruitment process will include screening of prospective staff and volunteers including police vetting.
- A process for complaint, investigation, disciplinary and appeal will be established to ensure any allegations of misconduct are addressed, in a timely and appropriate manner for all involved parties.
- The implementation of this Policy, the Charter and the associated processes will be monitored and reviewed regularly with reporting on compliance incorporated into the Health and Safety report submitted monthly to the Netball South Board.
- As Netball Centres establish a Child Protection Policy and processes complying with the Child Protection Act 2014, Netball South will advise and support them, including sharing information as necessary.

The welfare of children participating in activities for which Netball South is responsible is our primary concern. This Charter describes our commitment to protecting children within the care of our staff and volunteers and complies with Schedule 3, Zone General Code of Conduct and Ethics of the Netball South Regulations.

Children have a right to -

- Protection from all forms of harm no matter their age, culture, gender, language, racial origin, socio-economic status, religious belief and/or sexual identity.
- Express their views on all matters affecting them with their rights, wishes and feelings respected and promoted.

Across all forms of netball delivery to children, Netball South will take all reasonable measures to ensure that –

- Staff and volunteers create a safe and open playing environment that reduces risk for children and Netball South staff and volunteers.
- Activities are appropriate for the age and development of the child.
- Feedback to children is about their performance and not of a personal nature
- Positive and age-appropriate language is used when talking to children and in their presence.
- The appropriate protective gear is available and used correctly by children.
- All physical contact with children is relevant and appropriate to the activity and that before touching a child, permission of the child is sought.
- Permission is sought from the parents prior to any -
  - filming or photographing of children
  - transporting of children in a vehicle
  - administering of first aid
- No staff member or volunteer uses alcohol in the presence of children, or offers alcohol to children under any circumstances.
- No staff member or volunteer engages in communication with a child on a one-on-one basis through social media, texting or email, other than for relevant coach/athlete feedback or administration.
- No parent, coach, other children or spectators will be permitted to engage in any type of bullying behaviour including cyber/text bullying.

This Charter will be reviewed regularly, at least every three years, alongside the Child Protection Policy and the associated Protocols.

Netball South's processes need to be adapted to not only safeguard children engaged in activities we organise, but to protect staff and volunteers and reduce the risk of allegations or complaints against them. The following protocols will be incorporated into our existing processes.

**Recruitment**

- Compliance with the Policy will be included in all job descriptions and the expectation that the candidate has no prior convictions included in the person specification.
- During the recruitment process, questions will be incorporated into the interview requesting information about the candidate in respect of history of non-compliance or conviction relevant to the Child Protection Charter.
- New employees and volunteers will be screened via reference checking and police vetting prior to being confirmed as accepted by Netball South.

**Training and Support**

- All staff will be responsible for adhering to the Child Protection Charter.
- The health and safety portion of the induction process for all new employees will include training on protocols with respect to the Charter.
- Those with leadership responsibilities within the Netball South team will be responsible for monitoring the performance of their team members and addressing compliance needs as appropriate.

**Complaints and Investigative Procedure**

- A complaints process will be accessible to Netball South staff, volunteers and netball communities.
- Where a Netball South staff member or volunteer suspects harm in the form of physical or sexual abuse, ensuring the child is safe from immediate harm is the first priority.
- The attached flow chart describes the key steps when responding to a report of suspected harm.
- Where a Netball South employee or volunteer is implicated in alleged harm, Netball South will conduct an investigation and follow the established performance management and disciplinary proceedings as appropriate.

**Reporting and Review**

- The Chief Executive is the main contact and support for child protection matters, and will keep up to date with child protection legislation.
- The Policy, Charter and Protocols will be reviewed every three years. The next review is due in March 2020.
- The review may be brought forward for any reason deemed relevant by the Netball South Board. i.e. change to legislation
- Any review will be conducted by the Chief Executive and include amendments and implementation plan for change as necessary, for the approval of the Netball South Board.

## Potential Disciplinary Outcomes

Responding to suspected or disclosed harm in the form of physical or sexual abuse:

