**Medway Netball League (MNL). Safeguarding**

**Please note- MNL is used to denote both the senior and junior sections of the league and both committees.**

Medway Netball League (MNL) takes it’s safeguarding and duty of care responsibilities seriously. MNL provides opportunities for clubs and teams to play competitive netball. Clubs, teams and umpires are not contracted in any way or employed by MNL and are expected to know their own responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and in accordance with membership requirements of England Netball. Please read and keep up to date with England Netball’s safeguarding policies which can be accessed here [England Netball | Safeguarding Policies](https://www.englandnetball.co.uk/governance/safeguarding/safeguarding-policies/)

**Safeguarding policy – Medway Netball League**

Medway Netball League acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children, young people and vulnerable adults. We are committed to make sure our safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice and England Netball requirements.

The policy recognises that the welfare and interests of **children, those under 18 years of age,** are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that regardless of age, gender, religion or beliefs, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation or socio-economic background, everyone has:

* a positive and enjoyable experience of netball in a safe and child centred environment; and
* all steps are taken to protect individuals from abuse whilst participating in any netball activity run and organised by Medway Netball League.

MNL acknowledges that some children, including disabled children and young people, vulnerable adults and/or those with protected characteristics can be particularly vulnerable to abuse. We accept the responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare is always promoted. It is our aim to run the MNL to be inclusive and welcoming for all, including all abilities.

As part of our safeguarding policy Medway Netball League will:

* promote and prioritise the safety and well-being of children and young people and vulnerable adults;
* ensure the Medway Committee, volunteers, coaches, umpires and anyone else associated with the running of the league, understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding;
* require those involved in **regulated activity** within the MNL Committee have the appropriate level of DBS checks and that these are updated in line with statutory requirements;
* act on any safeguarding information received quickly and in line with statutory guidance;
* provide appropriate learning opportunities to support those running the league to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children, young people,vulnerable adults;
* hold safeguarding courses at required intervals and advise all Team/Club safeguarding leads/managers of any presenting issues;
* take appropriate action in the event of incidents/concerns of abuse and support individual/s who raise the concern;
* follow due process, including engaging with local safeguarding arrangements, and refer to statutory services and England Netball when necessary;
* have safeguarding as a standing item at both Senior and Junior committee meetings and appoint a safeguarding officer in line with the MNL constitution;
* ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored.
* promote and expect high standards of behaviour from all. Swearing and bad language; aggressive behaviour towards officials and/or other players will not be tolerated;
* require and monitor the responsible use of social media.
* require all teams to have a named safeguarding officer as required by England Netball and this to be notified to MNL with team registrations.
* require all teams and clubs to refer any safeguarding concern associated with MNL or any of its activities to the MNL Safeguarding officer as soon as possible.

As a condition of playing netball under the banner of MNL we expect that all teams and clubs:

* understand their own responsibilities as set out by England Netball;
* know who your team, club, league safeguarding officer is and communicate to all players and the parents/carers of players under 18 years of age;
* set out clear standards for behaviour from their players, officials, and spectators;
* ensure all communication goes directly through parents/carers for under 18 players/umpires. For those senior teams where there are under 18’s playing in teams this does apply and failure to do so would breach England Netball policies;
* ensure that any social media activity is appropriate and if teams/clubs are using any on-line training ensure that meets on-line safety guidelines;
* use appropriate umpires for all games. An umpire must be at least 16 years of age to umpire a senior game. There may be some occasions when an umpire on a senior game maybe under 18 years of age – 16 or 17 years of age. If this is the case, the umpire must have a parent/carer/appropriate adult on the side-line. It is the responsibility of the team who secured the umpire to make sure that this happens. Failure to do so could result in disciplinary action against the team. This is following EN advice and guidance.
* teams/clubs understand and adopt the guidance relating to playing during pregnancy;
* understand whether the team or club is operating under ‘regulated activity’ and ensure that coaches have any relevant DBS checks. It is the responsibility of all clubs and teams to follow the guidance from England Netball. . [England Netball | DBS](https://www.englandnetball.co.uk/governance/safeguarding/dbs/)

MNL expects that all coaches and umpires operating within the MNL have /are working towards the appropriate qualifications to be able to practice. Please refer to EN: https://www.englandnetball.co.uk/search/?search=officiating

https://www.englandnetball.co.uk/search/?search=coaching

**Reporting concerns**

* Spotting safeguarding concerns can be difficult and so please do seek advice if you have any questions. Help is available. If a child and/or vulnerable adult has been seriously harmed or is at risk of serious harm, whether linked to netball or not, please do report immediately to the police or the local authority designated lead. Remember a young person might be looking to tell a trusted adult something, so as clubs and teams make sure there is a safe space for all. [Concerned about a child: actions and referrals | Concerned about a child | Medway Council](https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200170/children_and_families/600/worried_about_a_child/1)
* If there are concerns about the behaviour and/or approach of a coach or an umpire, please discuss with the MNL safeguarding lead via any Committee member. Divisional reps are key people to go to and receive information. Please note these need to be safeguarding concerns. Other types of complaints to go via the advised MNL senior and junior complaints routes.

**Monitoring**

The policy will be reviewed each year and more often if there is a change in legislation and/or government guidance; as required by Medway Local Safeguarding Children Board and England Netball; and as a result of any other significant change or event.

Useful Contacts:

* MNL Safeguarding Lead: Steph Brivio OBE
* Medway Council Social Services: 01634 334466 Out of hours 03000 419191
* Childline: 0800 1111

The safeguarding policy is available on the website and in the junior handbook. The policy should be read alongside Respect in Netball and any Code of Conduct that is in place.

Please make sure everyone understands all the guidance. We all want the game of netball to be safe for all and we all have a part to play. If in doubt, ask a question.

MNL October 2023