



St Helens and St Helens Bees Netball Club Safeguarding Policy 2026 - 2027

1. Commitment to Safeguarding

At St Helens Netball Club (SHNC) and St Helens Bees Netball Club (SHBN), we are dedicated to creating a safe, inclusive, and nurturing environment for every child aged 3–12 who takes part in our netball activities. Safeguarding is at the heart of everything we do.

2. England Netball Commitment to Safeguarding

England Netball (EN) considers the safety and Wellbeing of Young People as central to its values. As a governing body we accept our responsibility for providing guidance and support to all members, ensuring that netball is enjoyable and safe.

England Netball considers it everyone's responsibility to safeguard Children and Young People in our sport, and so this Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy, together with the accompanying procedures, apply to all individuals involved 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. Understanding how to recognise concerns and how to respond to them, will help make all parts of the Reporting a Concern process more effective. Some concerns may relate to a Young Person's general Wellbeing, rather than due to them being subject to abuse.

England Netball accepts its role in supporting the netball community, offering assistance to these individuals. Where necessary, England Netball will take Disciplinary Action against any Members, connected participants, Volunteers and Staff where breach of this Policy, Safeguarding Disciplinary Regulations or the Codes of Conduct and Disciplinary Regulations is alleged. We welcome all genuine concerns and will treat them seriously. No action will be taken against you if you have raised a concern in the genuine belief that it is, true. However, complaints proven to be malicious could result in disciplinary action.

3. Purpose and Scope

Our Beliefs

- Every child deserves to grow, play, and learn free from abuse, harm, or neglect.
- We have a duty of care to promote the wellbeing of all children, protect them from harm, and ensure our practices always put their safety first.



Our Principles

- The welfare of children is our top priority in every decision we make and every activity we deliver.
- All children—regardless of age, ability, gender identity, race, religion, sex, or sexual orientation—have an equal right to protection.
- We recognise that some children may be more vulnerable due to past experiences, communication needs, or levels of dependency.
- We work in partnership with children, parents, carers, and external agencies to support and safeguard every child in our care.

Our Safeguarding Actions

We keep children safe by:

- Valuing, listening to, and respecting every child's voice.
- Appointing a dedicated Lead Safeguarding Officer.
- Following child protection and safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures, and staff/volunteer Code of Conduct.
- Implementing a robust online safety policy and digital safeguarding procedures.
- Providing ongoing supervision, training, and support for all staff and volunteers to ensure confident, competent safeguarding practice.
- Recruiting safely, with full background checks for all staff and volunteers.
- Handling personal information professionally and securely, in line with UK GDPR and data protection guidance.
- Sharing safeguarding information and good practice with children and families through leaflets, posters, group sessions, and one-to-one conversations.
- Ensuring children and families know how to raise concerns and where to go for help.
- Celebrating every child's achievement and treating all participants with respect.
- Using our safeguarding procedures to report concerns to the appropriate agencies, involving children and families where appropriate.
- Ensuring that fears about sharing information never prevent us from protecting a child.
- Managing any allegations against staff or volunteers fairly and appropriately.
- Maintaining an anti-bullying culture, with clear policies to address bullying effectively.
- Providing safe physical environments for children, staff, and volunteers through rigorous health and safety measures.
- Promoting a safeguarding culture where everyone—children, families, staff, and volunteers—feels respected, supported, and confident to speak up.

4. Legal and Regulatory Foundations

SHNC & SHBN is committed to operating in full compliance with all safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance. This policy, and the guidance that supports it, will be reviewed and updated whenever the law or national safeguarding expectations change.

SHNC & SHBN will work in line with the requirements of Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023), and in partnership with children's social care, the Police, and other relevant agencies whenever concerns arise.

This policy is informed by the legislation, national policy, and statutory guidance designed to protect children in England. The key legislation underpinning our safeguarding approach includes:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Protection of Children Act 1999
- Sexual Offences Act 2003

SHBN will always act within the expectations of this legislation to ensure the highest standards of protection for every child aged 3–11 who participates in our club.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Safeguarding at SHNC & SHBN is a shared responsibility. Every coach, volunteer, parent, committee member and helper has a duty to act if they become aware of a safeguarding concern. Protecting children aged 3–11 is at the core of our work.

Our Shared Responsibility

Safeguarding is not the role of one person alone. Everyone involved in SHNC & SHBN must remain alert to concerns, respond appropriately, and follow our safeguarding procedures to ensure every child is safe, supported and listened to.

England Netball's Role

England Netball supports safeguarding across the sport by:

- Ensuring all England Netball staff receive appropriate safeguarding training.
- Providing guidance, resources and advice to clubs, volunteers and members.
- Working in partnership with participants, volunteers, staff and statutory agencies to promote safe netball environments.

England Netball appoints a Lead Safeguarding Officer who:

- Shapes the organisation's safeguarding approach.
- Oversees the implementation of safeguarding policies and work programmes.
- Provides advice and resources to ensure consistent safeguarding practice across the sport.
- Acts as the central point of contact for concerns and liaises with statutory agencies when required.

England Netball also operates a Case Management Group (CMG), which:

- Oversees the investigation of complex safeguarding cases.
- Makes decisions on disciplinary actions, including suspensions and sanctions.
- Includes England Netball staff, independent safeguarding experts, and a Board representative for safety and welfare.

Regional Management Boards further support safeguarding by:

- Promoting good safeguarding practice within their region.

- Encouraging clubs to access recognised training such as *Time to Listen* and *Safeguarding and Protecting Children*.

SHBN's Responsibilities

As a club working with young children, SHNC & SHBN is responsible for ensuring that every environment in which children participate is safe, positive and enjoyable. To achieve this, SHBN will:

- Appoint a trained Club Safeguarding Officer.
- Provide the Safeguarding Officer with the support, training and resources needed to fulfil their role effectively.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers who carry out regulated activity have an up-to-date DBS check and are cleared to work with children.
- Maintain safe, child-centred practices across all sessions, events and activities.
- Work in partnership with England Netball, parents, carers and external agencies to uphold the highest safeguarding standards.

6. Duty of Care

SHNC & SHBN fully accepts its duty of care to every child who takes part in our activities. We recognise the findings of the *Duty of Care in Sport Review (2017)* and the *Whyte Review (2022)*, and we are committed to taking all reasonable steps to ensure that every child's experience at SHNC & SHBN is safe, positive and enjoyable.

Responsibilities of SHBN

Any club or organisation delivering netball activity has a responsibility to take reasonable care for the safety and wellbeing of the children involved. When a child is participating in SHNC & SHBN activity, the adult leading the session is acting in loco parentis and must behave as a responsible and prudent parent would.

To meet this duty of care, SHNC & SHBN will ensure that reasonable and appropriate steps are taken at all times. This includes:

- Embedding England Netball safeguarding policies and procedures within the SHNC & SHBN constitution.
- Making sure every child and parent/carer knows who the Club Safeguarding Officer is and how to contact them.
- Ensuring all SHNC & SHBN and England Netball safeguarding policies are easily accessible to members.
- Ensuring all staff and volunteers are familiar with the *Safeguarding Young People in Netball Policy*.
- Providing up-to-date safeguarding training for the Club Safeguarding Officer, coaches, volunteers and committee members.
- Ensuring everyone understands how to use the Reporting a Concern process.

Record-Keeping and Safety Measures

To maintain a safe environment, SHNC & SHBN will ensure that:

- A current register of all attendees is kept for every session.
- Up-to-date contact details, including emergency contacts, are securely stored.
- Confidential records of medical conditions, allergies, additional needs or other relevant information are held appropriately.
- First aid provision is available at all times, both on-site and off-site, with a trained First Aider present.
- All staff and volunteers are appointed through safe recruitment procedures.

- Risk assessments are completed and regularly reviewed for all venues, sessions and activities.

Safe Delivery of Netball Activity

SHNC & SHBN will ensure that children only take part in recognised, authorised and appropriately insured activities, delivered by suitably qualified coaches.

Coaches have a duty of care to:

- Deliver activities that are appropriate for the age, ability and developmental stage of each child.
- Work within the limits of their qualifications and training.
- Avoid delivering sessions beyond their qualification level (e.g., a Level 1 coach must not run a session unsupervised by a Level 2 coach).

7. Promoting Children's Wellbeing

At SHNC & SHBN, we recognise that many concerns about children relate not to abuse, but to their general health, happiness and overall wellbeing. Our experience reflects what is seen across the wider sport: worries about a child's emotional state, confidence, friendships or behaviour are far more common than concerns about abuse.

We believe that netball can have a hugely positive impact on children's lives. Supporting their wellbeing is a key part of our safeguarding duty, and everyone involved in SHNC & SHBN plays a role in helping children feel safe, valued and supported.

The Role of Trusted Adults

Coaches, volunteers and other adults in positions of trust often spend regular time with children and may notice changes in behaviour, mood or confidence. These adults can:

- Offer a listening ear
- Provide reassurance
- Spot early signs that a child may be struggling
- Encourage children to talk about how they feel

This early awareness is an important part of keeping children safe.

Recognising Concerns

Children may show behaviours that cause concern, such as withdrawal, anxiety, sudden changes in mood, or difficulties with peers. We understand that:

- Not all concerns will meet the threshold for Children's Social Care involvement
- Many situations are best supported through local, early-help pathways
- Families may benefit from practical guidance, emotional support or signposting to specialist services

How SHNC & SHBN Supports Children's Wellbeing

SHNC & SHBN is committed to helping children and families by:

- Raising awareness among coaches and volunteers so they can recognise early signs of difficulty
- Encouraging open communication with children and parents
- Providing information about local support services and organisations
- Signposting families to resources that can help with emotional wellbeing, behaviour, parenting support or specialist needs

Our aim is to ensure that every child who attends SHBN feels safe, supported and able to thrive — both on and off the court

8. Contacting St Helens Netball Club & St Helens Bees Netball Club

If you believe a Child or Young Person is in danger or at imminent risk of harm, contact the Police and other relevant emergency services by calling 999.

Report a concern to SHNC & SHBN via safeguarding@sthelensbees.co.uk (for both clubs)

NSPCC are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year on 0808 800 5000

9. Links To Support

At SHNC & SHBN, we encourage anyone with a concern about a child's safety or wellbeing to speak to the **Club Safeguarding Officer** in the first instance. They are trained, knowledgeable and able to offer guidance or take appropriate action.

If you need additional advice, or if you would prefer to speak to someone outside the club, the following organisations can offer confidential support, information and guidance.

Safeguarding Advice

NSPCC – Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU)

www.thecpsu.org.uk

Provides specialist advice on safeguarding children in sport.

NSPCC Helpline – 0808 800 5000

www.nspcc.org.uk

For anyone worried about a child. Offers free, confidential advice and support.

Childline – 0800 1111

www.childline.org.uk

Provides 1-to-1 counsellor chats for children and young people, plus online coping tools and resources.

Anti-Bullying Alliance – 0808 1000 143

www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk (anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk in Bing)

Support and advice on bullying and cyberbullying.

Mental Health Support

Samaritans – 08457 90 90 90

www.samaritans.org

Confidential emotional support for anyone experiencing distress.

Together All

www.togetherall.com

A safe online community offering anonymous mental health support.

NHS Children and Young People's Mental Health Services (CYPMHS)

NHS-funded mental health support for under-18s.

Information on access and referrals is available through local NHS websites, Social Services or your GP.

Mind – 0300 123 3393

www.mind.org.uk/information-support/helplines/ (mind.org.uk in Bing)

Support for a wide range of mental health concerns.

Young Minds

www.youngminds.org.uk

Mental health charity supporting children, young people and families.

Shout

www.giveusashout.org

A free 24/7 text service offering mental health support for adults and children.

Papyrus

www.papyrus-uk.org

Support, advice and crisis help for young people experiencing suicidal thoughts.

Domestic Abuse Support

National Domestic Violence Helpline – 0808 2000 247

www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk (nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk in Bing)

A free 24-hour helpline for women experiencing domestic abuse, run by Women's Aid and Refuge.

Forced Marriage Unit – 0207 008 0151

www.fco.gov.uk/forcedmarriage (fco.gov.uk in Bing)

Provides information, guidance and an advice line for victims and professionals.

Karma Nirvana – 0800 5999 247

www.karmanirvana.org.uk (karmanirvana.org.uk in Bing)

Supports victims of forced marriage and honour-based abuse.

Women's Aid – 0808 2000 247

www.womensaid.org.uk

Support and information for women experiencing domestic abuse.

Sexual Offending Support

Lucy Faithfull Foundation – 0808 1000 900

www.lucyfaithfull.org.uk (lucyfaithfull.org.uk in Bing)

Support, advice and resources relating to child sexual abuse prevention.

Stop It Now!

www.stopitnow.org.uk

A confidential helpline and resource hub run by the Lucy Faithfull Foundation