



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE, & VULNERABLE ADULTS

Valid as of 19th February 2024

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Introduction

The Isle of Man Basketball Association is committed to the wellbeing and safety of all participants in basketball and, in particular, to the wellbeing and safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults. The Basketball Association has created this local policy document to act as a guide to local participants, in conjunction with England Basketball policies and procedures for safeguarding which the Association supports.

The Isle of Man Basketball Association has a zero-tolerance approach to the abuse or maltreatment of children, young people, or vulnerable adults, and takes all concerns seriously. The Isle of Man Basketball Association is committed to working in partnership with England Basketball, IOM Sport, and all relevant agencies, to ensure that information and training is made available to members to ensure best practice when dealing with children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

All individuals involved in basketball under the jurisdiction of the Isle of Man Basketball Association agree to abide by all policies and procedures adopted by the Basketball Association. By participating in or being involved with Isle of Man Basketball, everyone is deemed to accept and agree to these policies which are available through the Isle of Man Basketball Association Website or on request.

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1. Policy Statement

In this document the term 'parent' will be used to refer to persons with parental responsibility. 'Staff' refers to anyone in a paid or voluntary role within Isle of Man Basketball.

Every person involved in basketball has a legal and moral responsibility to protect children, young people, and vulnerable adults, from abuse and neglect. All individuals including players, match officials, coaches, administrators, club officials and spectators agree to abide by this policy as well as all other Isle of Man Basketball policies. All such individuals, by participating or being involved in Basketball under the jurisdiction of the Isle of Man Basketball Association, are deemed to have assented to this and as such, recognise and accept their responsibility to be aware of the relevant principles and accountabilities.

2. Responsibilities

All those involved in Isle of Man Basketball will:

- Accept the legal responsibility to report all safeguarding concerns no matter how small they might appear.
- Accept the moral and legal responsibility to implement procedures to provide a duty of care for children, young people, and vulnerable adults, safeguard their wellbeing and protect them from abuse and neglect.
- Respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of children, young people, and vulnerable adults.
- Recognise that some children, young people, and vulnerable adults, could face additional barriers to getting help because of additional vulnerabilities which could include their ethnicity, gender, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, social background, or culture.
- Ensure they adopt best practice to safeguard and protect children, young people, and vulnerable adults, from abuse, and to reduce the likelihood of allegations being made against themselves.
- Respond appropriately to any complaints about poor practice, neglect, or allegations of abuse.

3. Key Principles

The guidance given in the procedures is based on the following principles:

- The Isle of Man Basketball Association is committed to ensuring that all children, young people, and vulnerable adults, who take part in Isle of Man Basketball Association activities are able to have fun and participate in an environment that keeps them safe from harm.
- The child's welfare is paramount.
- The voice the child should be heard at all levels of the game.
- All children, young people, and vulnerable adults, regardless of any protected characteristic including their age, gender, ability, any disability they may have, culture, racial origin, religious belief, and sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.
- A child is recognised as being under the age of 18 years.

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- An adult has a moral and statutory duty for the care, custody, and control of any person under the age of 18 under their supervision.
- All incidents of poor practice or suspicions of poor practice and allegations of neglect or abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

Children, young people, and vulnerable adults, have a right to expect appropriate support in accordance with their personal and social development with regard to their involvement in the game of basketball.

- It is the responsibility of the child protection experts and agencies to determine whether or not abuse has taken place, but it is everyone's responsibility to report any concerns.
- Confidentiality will be maintained appropriately at all times and the individual's safety and welfare must be the overriding consideration when making decisions on whether or not to share information about them.
- All safeguarding concerns reported will be conducted fairly and in accordance with principles of natural justice. Investigations and outcomes will be fair and proportionate.

All those involved in the management of young or vulnerable participants in basketball have a duty to ensure they are:

- Allowed access to the game in a way that is appropriate for their age and ability.
- Coached and trained by appropriately qualified or experienced people.
- Not required to play in so many games, or to attend training sessions, as to become a threat to their well-being.
- Not subjected to verbal or racial abuse from any source, especially from the bench and spectator gallery, including references to height, weight etc.
- Not subjected to bullying, threats, or undue pressure from any source.
- Encouraged to achieve their full potential at all levels.
- Instructed on how to behave, both on and off the court.
- Afforded respect and value in a playing and training situation and any other basketball environment.

4. Equality

All children, young people, and vulnerable adults, have the same rights to be safeguarded from abuse, but it should be recognised that some may face additional vulnerabilities and extra barriers to getting help. This could be because of their personal characteristics such as race, gender, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, social background, or culture. There should be awareness that these characteristics may mean that they are at greater risk of abuse because of factors such as prejudice, discrimination, reduced ability to resist or report abuse, communication barriers or myths based on stereotypes.

There are also factors that can make some talented athletes more vulnerable to harmful behaviours, either from themselves, their coaches or parents, or members of support staff.

These factors include:

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- Win at all costs approach.
- Intense coach-athlete relationships.
- A self-image that is linked closely with performance excellence.
- Child athletes operating in an adult-focused environment.
- Being away from family and support networks.
- Fear of losing funding or a place on the programme if they speak out.

Athletes at all levels of sport deserve to train and compete in a safe, healthy, and stimulating environment. As a Basketball England affiliated organisation, the Isle of Man Basketball Association has a responsibility to create a safe, athlete-focused environment for all.

5. Promoting Good Practice

Child abuse, particularly sexual abuse, can generate strong emotions in those having to deal with such an allegation. It is important to understand these feelings and not allow them to interfere with your judgement about what action to take. Neglect or abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school, and the sporting environment. Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with young people to harm them.

A teacher, coach or club volunteer may have regular contact with young people and be an important link in identifying cases where protection is needed. All suspected cases of poor practice, neglect or alleged abuse should be reported following the guidelines in this document. When a person enters basketball having been subjected to neglect or abuse outside the sporting environment, sport can play a crucial role in improving the person's self-esteem.

All personnel should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect children, young people, and vulnerable adults, and to protect themselves from false allegations. The following are common sense examples of good practice and how to create a positive culture when working in basketball:

- Always putting the welfare of each young person first, before winning or achieving goals.
- Always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging an open environment with no secrets).
- Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers young people to share in the decision-making process.
- Making sport fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play.
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Treating all young people equally and with respect and dignity.
- Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance both emotionally and physically (e.g. it is not appropriate for an adult to have an intimate relationship with a young person or vulnerable adult or to share a room with them).
- Keeping up to date with the technical skills, qualifications, and insurance in sport.
- Ensuring that if mixed teams are taken away, they should always be accompanied by male and female staff and sited where possible in different accommodation or on different floors within the accommodation.

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- Ensuring that at tournaments or residential events, adults should not enter children's rooms or invite children into their rooms unless in an emergency. If an adult is working in a supervisory capacity, they should only enter children's rooms when accompanied by another adult. A written account should be kept of the reasons for doing so.
- Being an excellent role model - this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol whilst supervising children and promoting a healthy diet.
- Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of children – avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will.
- Securing parental consent in writing to act in loco parentis if the need arises to give permission for the administration of emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment.
- Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given, which is then reported to the parents at the first opportunity.

6. Data Protection

When we receive information that raises concerns about a child, decisions need to be made about information sharing. These decisions are informed by the England Basketball Safeguarding policy and follow the '7 Golden Rules' of information sharing:

1. Remember that the Data Protection Act 2018, General Data Protection Regulation, and human rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.
2. Be open and honest with the individual (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
3. Seek advice from other practitioners if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.
4. Share with informed consent where appropriate and, where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. You may still share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is good reason to do so, such as where safety may be at risk.
5. Consider safety and well-being: Base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.
6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure: Ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely.
7. Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

Part of the decision-making process will include consideration about who to share information with. This could include:

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- Statutory organisations – the Police and/or Children’s Services must be informed about child protection concerns; The Safeguarding and Compliance Team at Basketball England should be consulted where there are concerns about someone in a position of trust or a concern about a child.
- Disclosure & Barring Service – must be informed of any concerns about someone who is working with children who is suspended or expelled from the organisation.
- Other clubs and other sports organisations – informing other organisations need to be considered according to the principles below in order that they can safeguard children in their care who may be at risk of harm.
- Individuals within the organisation – this will be decided on the basis of who needs to know what information in order to keep children safe.

It is important to note that there can be no expectation of privacy where an individual makes a disclosure relating to mental or physical abuse, or intentions to self-harm. In such cases, any disclosure must be immediately reported to the Association and/or relevant safeguarding bodies.

7. Supervision & Staff Ratios

It is important to ensure that, in planning and running training sessions, fixtures or events for children, young people, and vulnerable adults, consideration is given to providing an appropriate staffing/supervision ratio of responsible adults to participants. Benefits include:

- Minimising any risks to participants.
- Enhancing the benefits children draw from the activity.
- Reassuring parents/carers.
- Providing some protection for those responsible for providing, funding, or commissioning the activity in the event of concerns or incidents arising.

Key Considerations:

Due to the number of potential variables, it is not possible to recommend “one size fits all” guidance to cover all basketball activities involving children, young people, and vulnerable adults. There are, however, a number of key considerations that are recommended as good practice:

1. What makes an individual suitable to supervise children?

It is the responsibility of those commissioning, planning, or providing sessions/activities to ensure the suitability of those running the activity.

This includes:

- Being appropriately qualified for their role and the activity.
- Being subject to a safe recruitment process, including criminal records checks for eligible roles.
- Having insurance appropriate to their activity.
- Signing up to comply with a code of practice.

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- Understanding their responsibility to safeguard children.

2. What factors inform appropriate supervision levels?

Whatever the recommended ratio of adults to participants is, a minimum of two adults should be present. This ensures at least basic cover in the event of something impacting on the availability of one of the adults during the activity (e.g. in the event of one participant requiring the attention of an adult during the activity following an accident).

In the planning of all activities, and regardless of any other assessments that may be required (for example of equipment or for Health and Safety purposes), a risk assessment should be undertaken which specifically informs decision-making about appropriate supervision levels.

Key factors to assess include:

- Ages of participants.
- Additional supervision/support needs of some or all participants (for example due to disability or age).
- Competence/experience of participants for the specific activity.
- Nature of the venue - whether closed (e.g. sports hall) or open (e.g. outdoor games areas); private and exclusive to the group or open and accessible to the public); and what types of equipment participants may have access to

Under 18s as Supervisors/Coaches

Participants aged under 17 should not be included in staffing ratios even if they have coaching qualifications. Young people can become involved in coaching, but they should be assisting qualified or experienced coaches and not delivering sessions until they are appropriately qualified.

Parents as Supervisors

Parents should be encouraged to accompany their children to activities, but they should not be included in supervision calculations unless they are members of the Association and acting in a volunteering role or other capacity during the activity. In these circumstances, they should meet all appropriate requirements in terms of:

- Appropriate background checks.
- Clarity about their role and responsibilities.
- Who has overall responsibility for the group.
- What is acceptable practice.

Appropriately Qualified and Vetted

It is essential that all people working or volunteering with young people are appropriately recruited. For all roles which are eligible (e.g. MYG Coach), an enhanced DBS disclosure should be completed.

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It is essential that those working with young people are appropriately experienced or mentored/ supervised until they have gained experience. People in any role which involves working/ volunteering with young people should undertake regular safeguarding training to refresh and update their knowledge. The Isle of Man Basketball Association undertakes to make opportunities for such training available to all members of the Association, and particularly to those involved in Coaching.

Coaches working with young people must hold appropriate coaching qualifications or experience and must be proactive in safeguarding by taking responsibility for familiarising themselves with any relevant guidance, policies, or procedures.

8. Positions of Trust

A position of trust involves a person in a position of authority over another person. There is a need to protect young people aged 16 and 17 who, despite reaching the age of consent for sexual activity, are considered to be vulnerable to sexual abuse and exploitation, in defined circumstances. This includes sexual activity and relationships with adults who hold a position of trust, responsibility, or authority in relation to them and, as a result, have a considerable amount of power and influence in their lives. It is against the law for someone in a position of trust to engage in sexual activity with a child in their care, even if that child is over the age of consent (16 or over).

The power and influence that a member of staff or volunteer has over someone attending a group or activity cannot be underestimated. If there is an additional competitive aspect to the activity and one person is responsible for the other's success or failure to some extent, then the dependency will be increased. It is therefore vital for people to recognise the responsibility they must exercise in ensuring that they could not be considered to have abused their positions of trust.

Coaches and everyone involved in supervising children and adults at risk should be careful to ensure that the appropriate boundaries remain in their working relationships between themselves and participants.

Even where there is no alleged criminal offence, Disciplinary Procedures will be instigated if it comes to The Isle of Man Basketball Association's attention that an inappropriate relationship, inappropriate communication or other perceived 'grooming' behaviour has been demonstrated by a volunteer or staff member in a supervisory capacity with Under 18s. The Isle of Man Basketball Association will refer to statutory agencies including the Police when necessary.

Relationships with children should always be supportive, positive, and aimed at improving the young person's skill and progress.