



Safeguarding Policy for Children and Adults at Risk

Season 2026/27

SAFEGUARDING REPORTING MAP

1. Immediate danger or urgent medical need: call 999 straight away.
2. Report the concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately.
3. Record the concern factually on the Incident Report Form within 24 hours.
4. The DSL will decide whether to escalate to Children's Social Care, Adult Social Care, the LADO, Police, England Netball and/or other relevant agencies.
5. Do not investigate yourself. Do not promise confidentiality. Do not delay.

1. Policy Statement

London Mavericks Netball Club is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child and every adult at risk who engages with the Club, its pathway, camps, matchday activity, community work, staff, coaches, volunteers or contractors. The welfare of the individual is paramount.

The Club adopts a prevention-first approach. This means creating safe environments, recruiting safely, setting clear standards of conduct, listening to concerns, acting quickly when concerns are raised and working in partnership with statutory agencies, England Netball, parents, carers and partner organisations.

All staff, workers, agency staff, consultants, volunteers, coaches and Board members must read, understand and comply with this policy. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action, removal from duties, termination of engagement and/or referral to external agencies.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all London Mavericks Netball Club activity, including but not limited to:

- Club offices and administration;
- Training sessions, pathway activity, player development programmes and camps;
- Matchday operations, mascots, ball persons, stewarding and volunteering;
- Off-site events, travel, tours, festivals and residential activity;
- Online communication, digital platforms, photography, video and social media;
- Any third-party delivery or partnership activity undertaken in the name of the Club or for which the Club has safeguarding responsibility.

3. Legislative and Regulatory Framework

This policy is informed by, and should be read alongside, current safeguarding legislation, statutory guidance and sector guidance, including:

- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004;
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023, as updated in March 2026;
- Care Act 2014 (adult safeguarding);
- Equality Act 2010;
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012;
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006;
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Prevent duty context);
- Serious Crime Act 2015, including the mandatory reporting duty in relation to FGM for regulated professionals;
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021;
- Online Safety Act 2023;
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR;
- England Netball safeguarding policies, regulations and training requirements;
- NSPCC / Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) safeguarding guidance for sport.

London Mavericks is not a school or college and therefore Keeping Children Safe in Education is not directly binding on the Club. However, the Club recognises it as an important benchmark for safeguarding practice where relevant, particularly around designated safeguarding leadership, safer recruitment, online safety, allegations management and low-level concerns.

4. Definitions

4.1 Child

A child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.

4.2 Adult at risk

An adult at risk is an adult who has needs for care and support, is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect, and as a result of those needs may be unable to protect themselves.

4.3 Safeguarding

For the purposes of this policy, safeguarding means protecting children and adults at risk from maltreatment, abuse, neglect and exploitation; preventing impairment of health or development; ensuring safe and effective care; and taking action to enable the best outcomes.

4.4 Poor practice

Poor practice includes behaviour that does not meet expected safeguarding standards even if it does not meet the threshold for abuse. Poor practice can still create harm, normalise unsafe behaviour and escalate into more serious safeguarding issues.

4.5 Low-level concern

A low-level concern is any concern, no matter how small, that an adult working with children or adults at risk may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with expected standards of conduct, professional boundaries or Club values. Patterns of low-level concerns may indicate a wider safeguarding risk and must be reported.

5. Principles

- The welfare of the child or adult at risk is the paramount consideration.
- Everyone has the right to protection from abuse, neglect, bullying, exploitation and discrimination, regardless of age, disability, sex, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, culture, language or socioeconomic background.
- All concerns, allegations and disclosures will be taken seriously and acted on promptly.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- Concerns will be recorded factually, handled sensitively and shared on a need-to-know basis.
- The Club will work in partnership with statutory agencies and governing bodies where appropriate.
- Creating a safe culture is as important as responding to incidents.

6. Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 Board

- Provide strategic oversight of safeguarding;
- Ensure safeguarding is a standing Board agenda item;

- Ensure appropriate policies, resources, training and governance are in place;
- Receive safeguarding updates and assurance on incidents, themes and actions;
- Act promptly where allegations relate to senior leaders or safeguarding personnel.

6.2 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL has overall operational accountability for safeguarding within London Mavericks Netball Club.

- Act as the main point of contact for safeguarding concerns;
- Advise staff, coaches and volunteers on safeguarding action;
- Receive, review and manage safeguarding reports and low-level concerns;
- Make referrals to Children's Social Care, Adult Social Care, Police, the LADO and England Netball where appropriate;
- Maintain safeguarding records securely and separately from routine personnel files where appropriate;
- Oversee induction, training, safer recruitment and compliance checks;
- Review incidents, identify trends and report to the Board;
- Ensure this policy is reviewed at least annually and after any serious incident or significant legal change.

6.3 Designated Safeguarding Officer / deputy support

The Club may appoint a Designated Safeguarding Officer or deputy to support implementation, act as a safeguarding contact point and provide cover when the DSL is unavailable. Responsibilities should be clearly documented internally.

6.4 Staff, coaches, volunteers, contractors and Board members

- Read and comply with this policy and related codes of conduct;
- Complete required safeguarding training and refreshers;
- Maintain professional boundaries at all times;
- Report concerns, disclosures, allegations, poor practice and low-level concerns immediately;
- Cooperate fully with safeguarding inquiries and reviews;
- Prioritise welfare above performance, convenience or reputational concerns.

7. Safer Recruitment, Vetting and Induction

London Mavericks will adopt safer recruitment measures proportionate to the role and level of contact with children or adults at risk.

- Role descriptions will identify safeguarding responsibilities;
- Appropriate references will be obtained before appointment where required;
- DBS checks will be completed at the correct level for the role;

- No person may undertake unsupervised regulated activity unless required checks are satisfactorily completed;
- Where exceptional business need requires a person to start before checks are fully completed, a written risk assessment must be approved and the person must not have unsupervised contact with children or adults at risk;
- All relevant personnel must receive safeguarding induction and understand reporting routes from the outset;
- The Club will maintain a single central safeguarding record of relevant checks, training and qualifications.

8. Training and Awareness

- All staff, coaches and volunteers working directly with children must complete England Netball / safeguarding training appropriate to their role before undertaking unsupervised duties.
- Refresher training must be completed in line with governing body or Club requirements.
- The DSL and any deputy should undertake role-specific safeguarding leadership training and maintain current knowledge of legislation and guidance.
- The Club will provide periodic safeguarding updates on themes such as online safety, low-level concerns, safer working practice, image use, travel, matchday activity and allegations management.

9. Codes of Conduct and Safer Working Practice

All adults in positions of trust must model safe, respectful and professional behaviour. The following standards apply across the Club and are mandatory.

- Welfare must be prioritised over performance outcomes.
- Appropriate supervision ratios must be maintained in line with activity risk and governing body guidance.
- Adults must not develop inappropriate emotional, exclusive or sexual relationships with children or adults at risk.
- Sexual activity with a child under 18 is unlawful and will result in immediate referral to statutory agencies.
- Favouritism, humiliating treatment, bullying, intimidation, discriminatory language or degrading behaviour are prohibited.
- Adults must avoid one-to-one situations in private spaces wherever possible.
- Adults must not enter changing rooms while children are undressed unless there is an urgent welfare or safety need and doing so is in line with safe practice.
- Photography and filming are prohibited in changing rooms, toilets and other private areas.
- Coaches and staff must not use personal social media accounts, private messaging apps or personal phones to communicate directly with

children. Communication should be through approved channels and, where appropriate, through parents/carers or group communications.

- Coaches and staff must not provide one-to-one lifts unless this is an emergency or exceptional situation, is risk assessed and appropriately authorised, with parental consent where applicable.
- Personal gifts to children must not be given unless part of a structured, authorised reward system.
- Any low-level concern or poor practice issue must be reported; silence is not acceptable.

10. Supervision, Ratios and Matchday Activity

Supervision must be planned according to the age, maturity, needs and number of participants, the environment, the activity risk and any disability or medical needs.

- There must normally be at least two responsible adults available for activity delivery.
- Parents/carers should not be counted in supervision ratios where the Club has primary responsibility for care.
- Registers must be maintained for Club-led activity involving children.
- Collection arrangements must be clear, documented where appropriate and followed consistently.
- Mascots, ball persons and similar matchday participants must be supervised by suitable adults who understand safeguarding expectations.
- Any lost or uncollected child must be treated as a safeguarding incident and escalated immediately under the Club's reporting process.

11. Online Safety, Communication, Images and Media

The Club recognises that safeguarding extends to digital environments. Online risks include grooming, exploitation, bullying, harassment, harmful content, image misuse and inappropriate adult-child contact.

- All online communication with children must use approved Club channels and be relevant, professional and proportionate.
- Children should not be contacted through adults' personal social media, direct messages or personal email accounts.
- Parents/carers should be informed how the Club communicates online and how to raise concerns.
- Parental consent must be obtained before using children's images where required.
- Children will be appropriately dressed in published images and identifying details will be minimised.
- The Club will not use a child's image for a materially different purpose from that originally communicated without further consent where required.
- Images and recordings used for coaching purposes must be stored securely and accessed only by authorised personnel.

- Any concern regarding online contact, image misuse or digital harm must be reported under this policy.

12. Travel, Off-Site Activity and Medical Support

- Off-site activity must be risk assessed and safeguarding arrangements clearly communicated in advance.
- Children should, wherever possible, travel in groups rather than alone with one adult.
- Parental consent must be obtained for transport arrangements when the Club is responsible.
- Emergency action arrangements must be in place for off-site activity and residential provision.
- Medical treatment should be delivered in line with professional codes, privacy, dignity and safeguarding principles.
- Where two adults cannot reasonably be present for treatment, the situation must still be managed in a way that protects the young person and the practitioner, for example by visibility, documentation and communication.

13. Recognising Abuse, Harm and Exploitation

Abuse and safeguarding risk can take many forms. Staff and volunteers should be alert to indicators including physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, harmful sexual behaviour, child sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, domestic abuse, bullying and cyberbullying, coercive control, honour-based abuse, forced marriage, online grooming, radicalisation, trafficking, fabricated or induced illness and risks relating to mental health or self-harm.

The Club expects staff to use professional curiosity, to notice patterns, to report concerns early and not to dismiss concerns because they appear minor in isolation.

14. Responding to a Disclosure or Concern

- Listen carefully and stay calm.
- Do not ask leading questions or investigate.
- Reassure the person that they have done the right thing.
- Do not promise confidentiality; explain that the information will be shared only with people who need to know in order to help keep them safe.
- Make a factual record as soon as possible and within 24 hours.
- Report the concern immediately to the DSL.
- If there is immediate danger or urgent medical need, call 999 straight away.

Doing nothing is not an option.

15. Managing Allegations Against Staff, Coaches or Volunteers

Any allegation that an adult working with or for the Club has harmed a child, may have harmed a child, may have committed a criminal offence involving a child, or may otherwise pose a risk of harm must be reported to the DSL immediately. Where the allegation concerns the DSL, it must be reported to the Board Chair or another nominated Board lead without delay.

- The DSL will consider immediate protective action, including changes to duties, suspension as a neutral act where appropriate, and referral to the LADO and/or Police.
- Internal fact-finding must not compromise external investigations.
- The Club will follow governing body and statutory agency advice before progressing internal procedures.
- Records will be kept accurately, confidentially and securely.

16. Low-Level Concerns, Poor Practice and Culture

Not all safeguarding concerns will meet the threshold for statutory referral, but that does not mean they are unimportant. The Club will maintain a culture in which staff feel able and expected to report low-level concerns, poor practice and boundary issues.

- Repeated lower-level concerns may reveal a pattern requiring stronger action.
- Low-level concerns should be logged, reviewed and, where appropriate, addressed through supervision, training, management action or disciplinary processes.
- The Club will not tolerate retaliation against anyone who reports a concern in good faith.

17. Information Sharing, Confidentiality and Records

Safeguarding records must be clear, factual, contemporaneous where possible and stored securely. Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis, but safeguarding considerations may override ordinary expectations of confidentiality.

- Records must distinguish fact from opinion;
- If opinion is included, it must be clearly identified as such;
- Safeguarding records must be retained and handled in line with legal and operational requirements;
- The Club will comply with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 while recognising that data protection law is not a barrier to sharing safeguarding information where necessary and proportionate.

18. Key Contacts

- Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Kieran Crombie
- Club safeguarding email/contact to be confirmed and maintained in the published version.
- NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000
- Childline: 0800 1111
- Emergency services: 999
- Non-emergency Police: 101
- Local Authority Children's Social Care / Adult Social Care / LADO details should be inserted for the relevant borough(s) before publication.

19. Review and Governance

This policy is effective from March 2026 and will be reviewed at least annually, and sooner if there is a serious incident, material organisational change, change in legal or regulatory requirements, or learning arising from a case review, complaint, disciplinary matter or safeguarding audit.

Appendix 1: Incident Report Form

Date and time of incident / concern:

Date and time reported:

Location:

Name of child / adult at risk:

Date of birth / age (if known):

Name of parent / carer (if relevant):

Name and role of person reporting:

Nature of concern / disclosure / allegation:

Exactly what was seen / heard / disclosed (facts only):

Immediate action taken:

Was emergency medical assistance required? If yes, provide details:

Was Police / Social Care / LADO contacted? If yes, provide details:

Was the DSL informed? If yes, date/time and by whom:

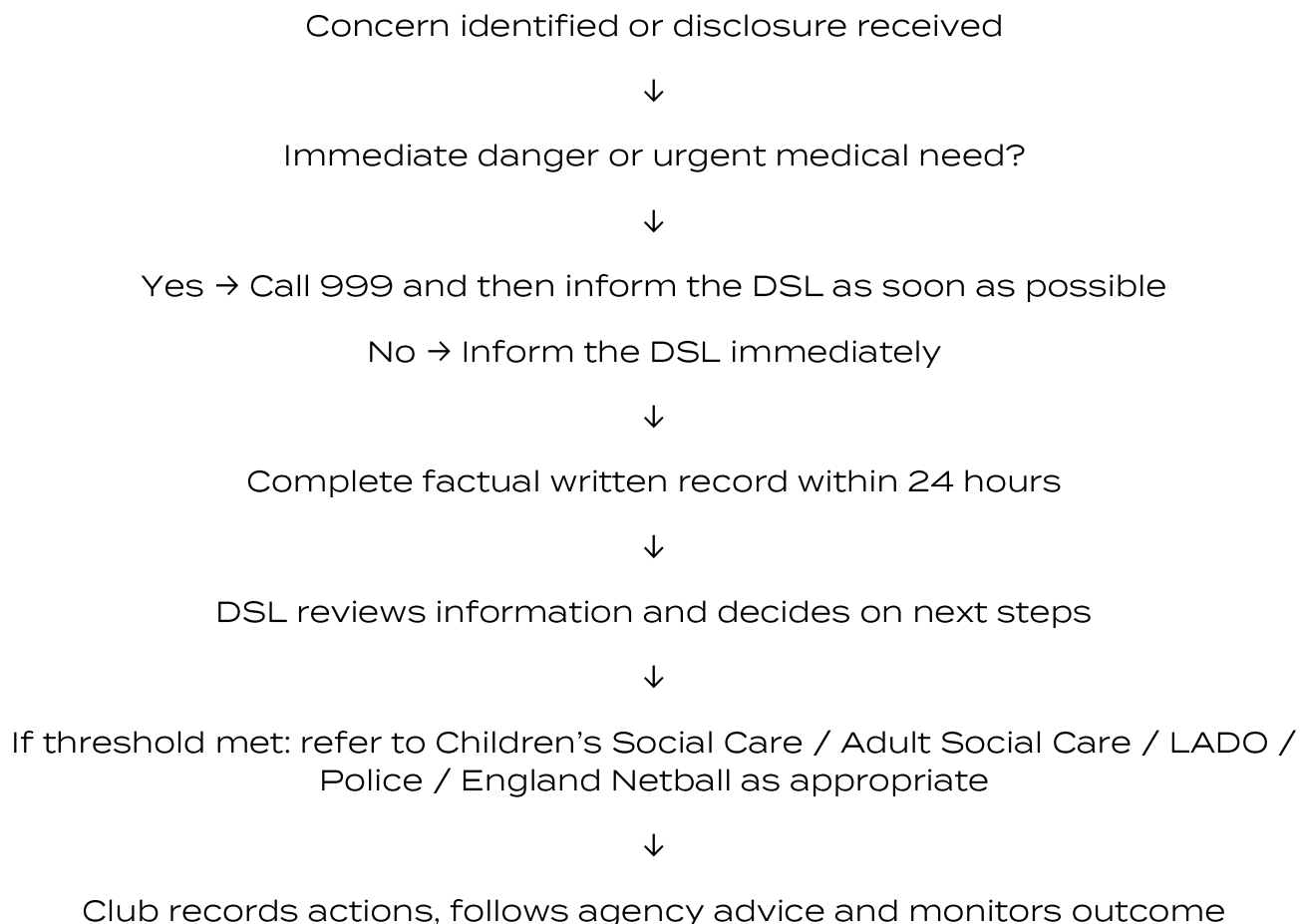
Any witnesses:

Any other relevant information:

Signature:

Date

Appendix 3: Safeguarding Reporting Flowchart



Appendix 4: Published Contact Sheet

- DSL: Kieran Crombie: Kierancrombie@mavericksportsgroup.co.uk or 07908143655
- Club safeguarding contact email: Kierancrombie@mavericksportsgroup.co.uk
- NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000
- Childline: 0800 1111
- Police emergency: 999
- Police non-emergency: 101
- Relevant Local Authority Children's Social Care: Hertfordshire 03001234943