



South London Topcats Brixton Topcats

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Date Adopted: May 2026

Review Date May 2027

ALL safeguarding concerns involving a child or vulnerable adult must be reported to the Club Welfare Officer immediately. If a child is in immediate danger, call 999. The Club's Welfare Officer can be contacted on safeguarding@brixtontopcats.org.

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Introduction

South London Topcats – Brixton Topcats Basketball Club (“the Club”) is dedicated to creating a safe, inclusive, and nurturing environment for all participants, staff and volunteers. The Club has an absolute duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and young people in its care.

This Safeguarding Policy outlines the Club’s commitment to protecting children (anyone under 18), young people, and vulnerable adults from harm. It applies to all staff, volunteers, coaches, officials and anyone working on behalf of Brixton Topcats Basketball Club.

Legal Framework

This policy is informed by and complies with:

- Children Act 1989 (amended by the Children Act 2004)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 (HM Government)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Freedom Act 2012
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018
- Basketball England’s Safeguarding & Protecting Young People Policy
- Basketball England’s Safeguarding Adults Policy
- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) requirements

Scope

This policy applies to all individuals involved with the Club in any capacity, including:

- All volunteers (coaches, team managers, officials, board members)
- Paid staff (if any)
- Contractors and external partners who come into contact with young people
- Parents, guardians and spectators during Club activities

Principles

The following principles underpin this policy:

- The welfare of the child is paramount and takes precedence over all other considerations
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, or socio-economic background, have the right to protection from harm
- All Club members share responsibility for creating a safe environment
- Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility – it is not limited to the Welfare Officer
- Children should be listened to and their views respected
- Families will be supported unless doing so would place the child at greater risk

Designated Club Welfare Officer

The Club must appoint a Designated Club Welfare Officer (CWO) who:

- Is independent of the Club Chair role (these must be separate individuals)
- Holds a current Basketball England Safeguarding Course certificate AND a current Basketball England Club Welfare Officer Course certificate (both required; renewal every three years)
- Holds an enhanced DBS check with barred list check (adults and children)
- Is the first point of contact for all safeguarding concerns within the Club
- Liaises with Basketball England's Lead Safeguarding Officer and statutory authorities as required
- Ensures the Club's safeguarding procedures are implemented and up to date

The Club Welfare Officer can be contacted at: Safeguarding@brixtontopcats.org

Safer Recruitment

The Club will follow safe recruitment procedures for all roles involving contact with children:

- All coaches, volunteers and staff working with under-18s must hold an enhanced DBS check before taking on their role
- DBS checks must be renewed every three years or upon any change in circumstances
- All individuals in regulated activity must complete Basketball England's mandatory safeguarding training
- References must be obtained for all new coaches and key volunteers
- Self-disclosure of criminal convictions will be required at application

Recognising Abuse and Neglect

Club members should be aware of the four main categories of abuse:

- Physical abuse: hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, or causing physical harm
- Emotional abuse: persistent emotional maltreatment, humiliation, threats, or rejection
- Sexual abuse: any sexual activity to which a child has not consented or cannot consent
- Neglect: persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical, emotional or psychological needs

Additional concerns include online abuse, bullying and cyberbullying, child criminal exploitation, and domestic abuse in the home environment. Club members should also be aware of the risks of "grooming" behaviours.

Signs That May Indicate Abuse

Possible indicators of abuse include (note: these may have innocent explanations):

- Unexplained injuries or injuries inconsistent with an explanation given
- Significant changes in behaviour or mood
- Fearfulness around particular adults
- Inappropriate sexual knowledge or behaviour for a child's age
- Withdrawal, sudden silence, or apparent distress
- Poor hygiene, inappropriate clothing or obvious hunger

Reporting Procedures

Any person who has a safeguarding concern about a child or vulnerable adult must act immediately:

- Do **NOT** investigate the matter yourself or promise confidentiality to the child
- Listen carefully and record what was said or observed as soon as possible
- Report your concern immediately to the Club Welfare Officer
- If the Welfare Officer is unavailable or is implicated in the concern, contact the Club Chair directly
- If a child is in immediate danger, call 999 without delay

The Club Welfare Officer will then:

- Assess the concern and take appropriate action
- Refer the concern to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) if the concern relates to an adult who works with children
- Refer to children's social care or the Police if required
- Notify Basketball England's Lead Safeguarding Officer
- Keep records of actions taken

External contacts for safeguarding concerns

- NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000 | Help: [nspcc.co.uk](https://www.nspcc.co.uk)
- Childline (for young people): 0800 1111
- Local Authority Children's Services
- Police (non-emergency): 101 | Emergency: 999
- Basketball England Lead Safeguarding Officer: safeguarding@basketballengland.co.uk

Managing Allegations Against Adults

Where a concern is raised about the conduct of an adult who works or volunteers with children, the Club Welfare Officer must:

- Not investigate the allegation internally
- Refer immediately to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)
- Notify Basketball England
- Consider whether the individual should be stood down from their role pending investigation (this does not imply guilt)
- Keep all information confidential to those who need to know

Child Photography & Media

The Club will obtain written consent from parents or guardians before photographing or filming junior members. Images of children will not be published on social media or websites without specific consent. Consent may be withdrawn at any time. In no circumstances should images of children be shared for any inappropriate purpose.

Codes of Conduct

All individuals working with children through the Club must sign and adhere to the Club's Code of Ethics and Conduct. The following specific expectations apply when working with young people:

- Never be alone with a young person (one-to-one coaching must take place in visible areas)
- Never transport young people alone in personal vehicles without written parental consent and a second adults present
- Never communicate with young people via personal social media accounts or personal mobile phones – use Club channels only
- Always ensure an appropriate adult is present during changing and welfare provision
- Report any boundary crossings – however innocent – to the Welfare Officer

Training

All individuals working with under-18s on behalf of the Club must:

- Complete the Basketball England Safeguarding Course AND the Basketball England Club Welfare Officer Course (Both are required for the CWO; all other individuals in regulated activity must complete the Safeguarding Course as a minimum)
- Renew training every three years, or as required by Basketball England. The three-year renewal cycle applies to both the Safeguarding Course and the Club Welfare Officer Course
- Attend any safeguarding updates provided by the Club or Basketball England

The Club Welfare Officer is responsible for maintaining a record of all safeguarding training completed. See the DBS Check Log and Coach Accreditation Record Sheet for how records are maintained.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Club Board, or sooner following a safeguarding concern, change in legislation, or updated guidance from Basketball England or HM Government. All changes will be communicated to relevant individuals.