

Play Sports Juniors Netball Academy

Health & Safety Policy

Policy Owner: Play Sports Leagues Ltd / Play Sports Juniors

Applies To: All Academy coaches, Lead Coaches, volunteers, staff, parents/carers and participants

Effective From: 1st September 2026

Review Date: 1st August 2027

Version: 1.0

1. Purpose

Play Sports Juniors is committed to providing a safe, well-managed environment in which children can participate in netball and develop their skills.

The health and safety of Academy participants, coaches, volunteers and other people attending Academy sessions is a priority.

This policy sets out the arrangements for identifying and managing health and safety risks, maintaining safe venues and equipment, responding to hazards and dealing with emergencies.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All Academy coaches and Lead Coaches.
- Volunteers and other adults working with the Academy.
- Play Sports Juniors staff.
- Academy participants.
- Parents and carers attending Academy activities.
- Venues and equipment used for Academy sessions.

It applies during Academy sessions and other activities organised by Play Sports Juniors.

3. Responsibilities

Play Sports Juniors is responsible for ensuring that appropriate health and safety arrangements are in place for Academy activities.

The Lead Coach has overall responsibility for health and safety during each individual session and must:

- Check that the session environment is safe.
- Complete appropriate checks before the session.
- Identify and respond to hazards.

- Ensure equipment is suitable and safely used.
- Make coaches aware of relevant risks.
- Take appropriate action if conditions become unsafe.
- Report significant health and safety concerns to Head Office.

All coaches and volunteers are responsible for:

- Following Academy health and safety procedures.
 - Remaining alert to hazards.
 - Reporting concerns promptly.
 - Following instructions from the Lead Coach.
 - Taking reasonable steps to protect participants from avoidable harm.
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4. Venue Safety

Before an Academy operates at a venue, Play Sports Juniors will ensure that appropriate venue arrangements and risk assessments are in place.

Coaches should familiarise themselves with:

- Entrances and exits.
- Emergency exits.
- Fire evacuation arrangements.
- First aid arrangements.
- Location of first aid equipment.
- Toilets and changing facilities where applicable.
- Safe areas for participants and spectators.
- Any venue-specific hazards or restrictions.
- Emergency contact arrangements.

Any significant change to the venue or session environment should be considered before the session begins.

5. Pre-Session Safety Checks

The Lead Coach should complete a visual safety check before each session.

This should include consideration of:

- Playing surface and flooring.
- Court markings and surrounding areas.
- Walls, doors and other fixed structures.
- Lighting and visibility.
- Equipment and netball posts.
- Loose objects or trip hazards.
- Wet or slippery surfaces.
- Temperature and ventilation.
- Access and exit routes.

- Any other hazards that could affect participants or coaches.

Hazards should be removed, controlled or reported before children participate wherever reasonably possible.

If a hazard cannot be adequately controlled, the Lead Coach should consider modifying, relocating or cancelling the activity.

6. Dynamic Risk Assessment

Risk assessments cannot identify every situation that may occur during a session.

Coaches must therefore use dynamic risk assessment throughout Academy activities.

This means coaches should continually consider:

- What has changed?
- What could cause harm?
- Who could be affected?
- Can the risk be removed or reduced?
- Does the activity need to be changed or stopped?

Coaches should not continue an activity simply because it was considered safe at the start of the session.

7. Equipment Safety

All equipment used during Academy sessions should be suitable for the age and ability of participants and used for its intended purpose.

Coaches must:

- Check equipment before use.
- Remove damaged or unsafe equipment from use.
- Ensure equipment is positioned safely.
- Ensure children use equipment appropriately.
- Store equipment safely after use.
- Report damaged equipment to Play Sports Juniors.

Children should not be allowed to climb on, sit on or misuse netball posts or other equipment.

8. Netball Posts and Court Equipment

Netball posts and other large or heavy equipment must be positioned securely before use.

Coaches should ensure:

- Posts are stable.
- Appropriate bases or anchoring systems are used where required.
- Equipment is positioned away from unnecessary hazards.
- Children are supervised when equipment is being moved.
- Children are not permitted to move heavy equipment unless specifically instructed and it is safe to do so.

Only coaches or authorised adults should normally assemble, move or adjust heavy Academy equipment.

9. Safe Coaching Practices

Coaches should plan activities appropriate to the age, ability and experience of participants.

Sessions should include:

- Appropriate warm-ups where required.
- Clear explanations and demonstrations.
- Suitable levels of physical activity.
- Appropriate rest and water breaks.
- Safe spacing between participants.
- Activities that are suitable for the available space.

Coaches should adapt activities where there is an increased risk of injury or where a participant is struggling to participate safely.

10. Participant Responsibilities

Participants are expected to:

- Follow reasonable safety instructions.
- Use equipment appropriately.
- Treat other participants respectfully.
- Tell a coach if they feel unwell or are injured.
- Tell a coach if they notice something unsafe.
- Avoid deliberately creating hazards for others.

Coaches should reinforce these expectations in an age-appropriate manner.

11. Clothing, Footwear and Personal Items

Participants should wear suitable clothing and footwear for netball and the venue.

Coaches should consider whether:

- Footwear is suitable for the playing surface.
- Jewellery or other items present an avoidable risk.
- Loose clothing or accessories could cause injury.
- Personal belongings are stored safely and away from the playing area.

Where an item creates a significant safety risk, the participant should be asked to remove it or modify their participation where appropriate.

12. Weather and Environmental Conditions

Although Academy sessions may take place indoors or outdoors, environmental conditions must always be considered.

Coaches should consider:

- Extreme heat or cold.
- Wet or slippery surfaces.
- Strong winds.
- Rain or other severe weather.
- Poor visibility.
- Excessive indoor temperatures.
- Ventilation.

Where conditions become unsafe, the Lead Coach should modify, pause or stop the session and follow the Severe Weather / Session Cancellation Policy where appropriate.

13. First Aid and Medical Emergencies

At least one appropriately trained first aider should be available during Academy sessions in accordance with Play Sports Juniors arrangements.

Coaches must know how to access first aid assistance and emergency services.

All injuries, accidents and medical emergencies must be dealt with in accordance with the Academy's First Aid & Medical Policy.

In an emergency, coaches should contact emergency services by calling **999** where necessary.

14. Fire and Evacuation

Coaches must follow the venue's fire safety and evacuation procedures.

If a fire alarm or evacuation instruction is given:

- Stop the session immediately.
- Instruct participants to leave calmly.
- Follow the designated evacuation route.
- Take the register/attendance information where practicable.
- Move to the designated assembly point.
- Keep participants together and supervised.
- Do not re-enter the building until authorised.

Further arrangements are set out in the Emergency & Evacuation Procedures.

15. Emergencies and Serious Incidents

If a serious health and safety incident occurs, the Lead Coach should:

1. Protect participants from further danger where possible.
2. Stop or modify the activity.
3. Provide or arrange appropriate first aid.
4. Contact emergency services where required.
5. Ensure other children remain safe and supervised.
6. Contact Play Sports Juniors Head Office where appropriate.
7. Record and report the incident in accordance with Academy procedures.

Coaches should remain calm and follow venue-specific emergency arrangements.

16. Safeguarding and Health & Safety

Health and safety concerns may also become safeguarding concerns.

Examples may include:

- A child being deliberately placed at significant risk.
- Unsafe behaviour that is repeated or intentional.
- Concerns about an adult's conduct.
- A child disclosing that they do not feel safe.
- A venue or activity presenting an ongoing risk to a particular child.

Where a concern relates to safeguarding, coaches must follow the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy in addition to this policy.

17. Accidents, Incidents and Near Misses

Accidents, significant incidents and near misses should be reported to the Lead Coach and recorded where required.

Examples include:

- Injuries.
- Falls.
- Collisions.
- Equipment failures.
- Significant hazards.
- Serious behavioural incidents resulting in injury.
- Situations that could reasonably have resulted in harm.

Recording near misses helps Play Sports Juniors identify risks before someone is injured.

Further requirements are set out in the Accident, Incident & Near-Miss Reporting Procedure.

18. Unsafe Conditions

Any coach who identifies a significant hazard must inform the Lead Coach immediately.

Where possible, the hazard should be removed or controlled.

If this cannot be achieved safely, the activity should be paused or stopped.

The Lead Coach should contact Play Sports Juniors Head Office where the issue cannot be resolved locally or may affect future sessions.

19. Lone Working

Academy sessions should normally have a minimum of two coaches present.

Coaches should not knowingly place themselves in a situation where they are required to supervise children alone contrary to Academy arrangements.

If an unexpected situation results in only one coach being available, the Lead Coach should contact Play Sports Juniors Head Office for advice and consider whether the session can safely continue.

20. Coach Responsibilities

All Academy coaches must:

- Follow this policy and venue procedures.
- Complete appropriate pre-session safety checks.
- Use dynamic risk assessment.
- Supervise participants appropriately.
- Report hazards and incidents.
- Use equipment safely.
- Follow emergency procedures.

- Complete required training.
 - Raise concerns with the Lead Coach or Head Office.
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21. Parent and Carer Responsibilities

Parents and carers are expected to:

- Follow venue and Academy safety instructions.
- Inform Play Sports Juniors of relevant medical or safety information.
- Ensure children arrive appropriately prepared for sessions.
- Avoid entering restricted areas unless authorised.
- Follow instructions during emergencies.
- Raise health and safety concerns with Academy staff.

Parents/carers should not interfere with coaching activities in a way that creates a safety risk.

22. Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.
 - First Aid & Medical Policy.
 - Emergency & Evacuation Procedures.
 - Accident, Incident & Near-Miss Reporting Procedure.
 - Risk Assessment Policy.
 - Severe Weather / Session Cancellation Policy.
 - Behaviour & Anti-Bullying Policy.
 - Arrival, Collection & Handover Policy.
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23. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where required due to:

- Changes in legislation or guidance.
 - Changes to Academy activities or venues.
 - Significant accidents, incidents or near misses.
 - Changes to equipment or facilities.
 - Lessons identified through risk assessments or reviews.
 - Changes to Play Sports Juniors policies or procedures.
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24. Key Contacts

Play Sports Juniors Head Office / Safeguarding Contact

Luke Impett

Telephone: 01256 644049
Email: luke.impett@playsportsleagues.co.uk

Company Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Rob Fulker
Telephone: 01256 644049
Email: rob.fulker@playsportsleagues.co.uk

Emergency Services: 999

Policy Approval

Approved by: Luke Impett

Position: Schools & Community Sport Lead

Date: 28/8/26

Signature: 

Review Date: 1st August 2027