

Play Sports Juniors Netball Academy

Severe Weather / Session Cancellation Policy

Policy Owner: Play Sports Leagues Ltd / Play Sports Juniors

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

Effective From: 1st September 2026

Review Date: 1st August 2027

Version: 1.0

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Play Sports Juniors Netball Academy sessions are delivered safely when severe weather, environmental conditions, venue closures or other circumstances may affect the ability to safely run a session.

The safety and welfare of participants, coaches and other individuals attending the Academy will always take priority over delivering a scheduled session.

Where an Academy operates from an external venue, responsibility for determining whether the venue or its facilities are open and suitable for use will normally remain with the venue operator. Play Sports Juniors will follow reasonable venue closure or restriction decisions and will make its own operational decisions regarding the safe delivery of Academy sessions.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Play Sports Juniors Netball Academy sessions and covers:

- Outdoor and indoor venues.
 - Severe weather conditions.
 - Unsafe environmental conditions.
 - Venue closures or restrictions.
 - Travel disruption.
 - Coach availability.
 - Cancellation, postponement or modification of sessions.
 - Weather-related incidents occurring during a session.
 - Communication with parents/carers.
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3. Responsibility for Decisions

Different parties may have responsibility for different decisions.

Venue operator

The venue operator will normally be responsible for deciding whether its facilities:

- Are open.
- Are safe and suitable for use.
- Need to be restricted.
- Need to be closed.
- Can reopen following adverse weather or an incident.

Where a venue closes, restricts access to, or declares its facilities unsuitable for use, Play Sports Juniors will follow the venue's decision and will not require coaches or participants to use a facility that the venue has deemed unsafe.

Play Sports Juniors Head Office

Play Sports Juniors is responsible for deciding whether the Academy can safely deliver its programme, taking into account factors including:

- Venue availability.
- Coach availability and staffing levels.
- Travel disruption affecting coaches.
- Academy-specific safety concerns.
- Participant welfare.
- Alternative arrangements.

Play Sports Juniors may cancel, postpone or modify a session even where the venue remains open if it determines that the Academy cannot safely deliver the session.

Lead Coach

The Lead Coach is responsible for the immediate management of safety during the session.

Where an immediate safety concern arises, the Lead Coach may:

- Stop an activity.
- Move participants to a safer area.
- Modify the session.
- Stop the session if necessary.
- Contact the venue.
- Contact Play Sports Juniors Head Office.

4. Weather and Environmental Conditions

Weather and environmental conditions that may affect an Academy session include:

- Heavy rain.
- Snow and ice.
- High winds.
- Thunder and lightning.

- Flooding.
- Extreme heat.
- Extreme cold.
- Poor visibility.
- Storms.
- Unsafe playing surfaces.
- Fallen branches, debris or other hazards.
- Significant travel disruption.

The seriousness of the conditions will depend on the venue, facilities, activity being undertaken and any advice or restrictions issued by the venue.

5. Outdoor Sessions

Where the Academy uses outdoor facilities, Play Sports Juniors will follow any safety restrictions or closure decisions made by the venue.

The venue may determine that outdoor facilities are unsuitable because of conditions such as:

- Ice or snow.
- Flooding.
- Waterlogged or damaged surfaces.
- High winds.
- Lightning.
- Fallen debris.
- Other environmental hazards.

Where the venue confirms that the facility is unsuitable for use, the Academy session will not proceed at that facility unless the venue subsequently confirms that it is safe and available or an alternative suitable arrangement has been agreed.

Where the venue remains open but an Academy coach identifies an immediate safety concern during a session, the Lead Coach may stop or modify the activity and contact Head Office where further action is required.

6. Indoor Sessions

Severe weather can also affect indoor Academy sessions.

The venue may close or restrict access because of:

- Flooding or water ingress.
- Building damage.
- Heating or ventilation problems.
- Power failure.
- Unsafe access routes.
- Extreme temperatures within the facility.
- Damage caused by severe weather.
- Other operational or safety concerns.

Where the venue closes or restricts the facility, Play Sports Juniors will follow that decision.

Where the venue remains open, Play Sports Juniors may still cancel or modify the Academy session if there is a separate concern regarding staffing, travel, participant welfare or the safe delivery of the programme.

7. High Winds

High winds may create additional risks at outdoor venues, including:

- Unstable equipment.
- Netball posts or other equipment becoming unsafe.
- Flying debris.
- Falling branches.
- Damage to facilities.
- Unsafe access routes.

Coaches must follow any restrictions or instructions provided by the venue.

Coaches must not use equipment that appears unstable or unsafe.

Where the venue closes or restricts the facility because of high winds, the Academy will follow that decision.

8. Thunder and Lightning

Thunder and lightning can create a significant risk during outdoor activity.

Where the venue suspends or stops outdoor activity because of lightning, Play Sports Juniors will follow the venue's decision.

If lightning becomes a concern during a session, the Lead Coach should stop the activity and move participants to a suitable safe location in accordance with the venue's emergency arrangements.

Outdoor activity must not resume until it is considered safe to do so and any relevant venue restrictions have been lifted.

9. Extreme Heat

During periods of unusually high temperatures, coaches should consider:

- Access to drinking water.
- Opportunities for rest.
- The intensity and duration of activities.
- Access to shade or cooler areas where available.
- Signs of heat exhaustion or heat-related illness.
- Individual participant needs.

The session may be shortened, modified or stopped where conditions become unsuitable.

Where the venue has specific restrictions relating to extreme heat, these must be followed.

Parents/carers should ensure that children arrive appropriately prepared for hot weather and have sufficient drinking water.

10. Extreme Cold, Ice and Snow

Cold temperatures, snow and ice may create risks relating to:

- Playing surfaces.
- Entrances and exits.
- Car parks and pedestrian areas.
- Equipment.
- Heating within indoor venues.
- Travel to and from the venue.

Where a venue determines that its facilities or access routes are unsafe, Play Sports Juniors will follow the venue's decision.

Coaches should report any additional hazards they identify to the venue and/or Play Sports Juniors Head Office.

11. Flooding and Water Hazards

Flooding or significant water accumulation may make an area unsuitable for use.

Risks may include:

- Slips and falls.
- Hidden hazards beneath water.
- Contaminated water.
- Electrical hazards.
- Damage to playing surfaces.
- Unsafe access and exit routes.

Where flooding affects the venue, Play Sports Juniors will follow the venue's decision regarding access and use of the facility.

Coaches must not allow participants to use an area that they believe presents an immediate and unmanaged risk.

12. Travel and Attendance

Where an Academy session remains open, parents/carers are responsible for deciding whether it is safe for their child to travel to the venue.

Play Sports Juniors will consider significant travel disruption affecting coaches when determining whether the Academy can safely staff and deliver a session.

The venue's decision regarding whether its facilities are open or accessible will also be taken into account.

Coaches should not be expected to undertake journeys that Play Sports Juniors considers unsafe.

Parents/carers should check Academy communications before travelling during periods of severe weather.

13. Session Cancellation

Where a session needs to be cancelled, Play Sports Juniors will communicate this to parents/carers as soon as reasonably practicable.

Communication should, where possible, include:

- The affected session.
- The reason for cancellation.
- Whether an alternative session or arrangement will be offered.
- Any relevant information regarding credits or refunds.

Play Sports Juniors will aim to avoid unnecessary late cancellations but may need to make decisions at short notice where circumstances change.

14. Postponement or Modification

Where appropriate, Play Sports Juniors may consider alternatives to full cancellation, including:

- Postponing the session.
- Changing the session time.
- Moving to an alternative venue.
- Moving indoors where appropriate.
- Shortening the session.
- Modifying activities.
- Offering an alternative session.

Any alternative arrangement must be appropriately staffed and considered safe before being confirmed.

15. Cancellation During a Session

If conditions become unsafe during an Academy session, the Lead Coach will prioritise the immediate safety of participants.

Depending on the circumstances, the Lead Coach may:

1. Stop the activity.
2. Move participants to a safe location.
3. Follow venue emergency procedures where applicable.
4. Contact Play Sports Juniors Head Office.
5. Contact parents/carers where early collection is required.
6. Maintain appropriate supervision until participants are safely collected or an alternative arrangement has been confirmed.

Children must not be left unattended as a result of a session being stopped or cancelled.

The Late / Uncollected Child Procedure must be followed where a child remains at the venue after the session has ended and their parent/carer has not arrived.

16. Coach Availability

Severe weather may affect whether coaches are able to travel safely to the venue.

Coaches must notify Play Sports Juniors Head Office as soon as possible if they are unable to attend.

Play Sports Juniors will attempt to arrange an appropriately qualified replacement where possible.

If the required minimum staffing level cannot be safely maintained, the session may need to be cancelled.

17. Venue Closure

Where a venue closes or declares its facilities unavailable or unsuitable for use, the Academy session will not proceed at that venue unless:

- The venue subsequently confirms that the facility is safe and available; or
- A suitable alternative arrangement has been confirmed.

Play Sports Juniors will communicate any resulting cancellation, postponement or alternative arrangement to parents/carers as soon as reasonably practicable.

Play Sports Juniors will not override a venue's decision that its facilities are unsafe or unavailable.

18. Communication with Parents/Carers

Play Sports Juniors will use the contact details provided during registration to communicate significant session changes.

Parents/carers are responsible for:

- Providing accurate contact details.

- Updating Play Sports Juniors if their details change.
- Checking communications relating to Academy sessions.
- Following instructions provided following a cancellation or change.
- Ensuring children are appropriately prepared for the conditions.

Where a session is cancelled before participants arrive, Play Sports Juniors will make reasonable efforts to communicate the cancellation in advance.

19. Refunds and Alternative Arrangements

Any refund, credit or replacement session resulting from a cancellation will be dealt with in accordance with the **Parent Terms & Conditions**.

Cancellation of a session by Play Sports Juniors or because a venue is unavailable may result in an alternative session, credit or refund where appropriate.

Where a parent/carer chooses not to attend because they consider travel conditions unsuitable, but the Academy session remains open and available, a refund will not normally be provided unless otherwise agreed or required by law.

20. Risk Assessment

Weather and environmental risks must be considered as part of the Academy's wider risk management arrangements.

A suitable risk assessment must be completed for each Academy venue before the Academy begins operating at that venue.

The venue's own risk assessments and safety arrangements should also be taken into account where relevant.

Academy risk assessments should consider factors including:

- Venue layout.
- Court and playing surfaces.
- Equipment and netball posts.
- Entrances and exits.
- Slips, trips and falls.
- Fire and emergency arrangements.
- First aid provision.
- Participant arrival and collection.
- Safeguarding.
- Weather and environmental conditions.
- Emergency access.
- Staffing levels.
- Medical and accessibility considerations.

The Lead Coach must also carry out a dynamic assessment of the environment before and during each session.

Where an immediate and unmanaged safety risk is identified, the activity must be stopped or modified until the risk has been appropriately addressed.

21. Safeguarding and Participant Welfare

Severe weather or session cancellation must not compromise safeguarding arrangements.

Where a session is cancelled or stopped, coaches must continue to ensure:

- Appropriate supervision.
- Safe collection of children.
- Clear communication with parents/carers.
- Children are not left unattended.
- Late or uncollected children are managed appropriately.
- Any safeguarding concern is reported in accordance with the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.

If a child becomes distressed or anxious because of a cancellation, severe weather or an unexpected change, coaches should provide appropriate reassurance and support.

22. Coach Responsibilities

All Academy coaches are responsible for:

- Following venue safety instructions.
- Following Play Sports Juniors policies and procedures.
- Completing appropriate pre-session safety checks.
- Carrying out dynamic risk assessments.
- Reporting hazards promptly.
- Stopping activities where there is an immediate unmanaged risk.
- Following venue emergency arrangements.
- Communicating concerns to the Lead Coach and/or Head Office.
- Maintaining appropriate supervision following cancellation or early closure.
- Recording relevant incidents or safety concerns.

Coaches must never knowingly continue an activity where there is a serious and unmanaged risk to participants.

23. Parent/Carer Responsibilities

Parents/carers are responsible for:

- Providing accurate contact information.
- Checking Academy communications.
- Ensuring their child arrives appropriately prepared for the weather.
- Providing appropriate clothing and drinking water where necessary.
- Making safe travel decisions.
- Collecting their child promptly if a session is cancelled or ended early.

- Following Academy instructions during severe weather or emergency situations.
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24. Recording Weather-Related Decisions

Where a session is cancelled, significantly modified or stopped because of weather, venue closure or another environmental concern, Play Sports Juniors may record:

- The date and time.
- The venue.
- The circumstances.
- The decision made.
- Who made or communicated the decision.
- Any relevant venue advice or closure information.
- Communication sent to parents/carers.
- Any alternative arrangements.
- Any incidents or concerns arising.

Records should be stored securely and handled in accordance with the Data Protection & Privacy Policy.

25. Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.
 - Health & Safety Policy.
 - Risk Assessment Policy.
 - First Aid & Medical Policy.
 - Emergency & Evacuation Procedures.
 - Accident, Incident & Near-Miss Reporting Procedure.
 - Arrival, Collection & Handover Policy.
 - Late / Uncollected Child Procedure.
 - Parent Terms & Conditions.
 - Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy.
 - Data Protection & Privacy Policy.
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26. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed at least annually or sooner where:

- There is a significant change to Academy operations.
 - A serious incident occurs.
 - Venue arrangements change.
 - Relevant legislation or guidance changes.
 - Lessons from incidents or cancellations indicate that amendments are required.
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27. Key Contacts

Play Sports Juniors Academy Safeguarding Contact / Head Office

Luke Impett

Schools & Community Sport Lead

01256 644049

luke.impett@playsportsleagues.co.uk

Company Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Rob Fulker

01256 644049

rob.fulker@playsportsleagues.co.uk

Emergency Services

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Policy Approval

Approved by: Luke Impett

Position: Schools & Community Sport Lead

Date: 28th August 2026

Signature: 

Next Review Date: 1st August 2027